

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



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## Research and Evaluation for the Testing and Interpretation of Physical Evidence in Publicly Funded Forensic Laboratories, Fiscal Year 2021

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### Overview

The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), National Institute of Justice ([NIJ](#)), is seeking applications for funding for research and evaluation studies to produce practical knowledge that has the potential to improve the examination and interpretation of physical evidence in forensic science laboratories. This project furthers the Department's mission by sponsoring research to provide objective, independent, evidence-based knowledge and tools to meet the challenges of criminal justice, particularly at the state and local levels.

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

### Solicitation Categories

This solicitation does not include Solicitation Categories.

### Eligible Applicants:

City or township governments, County governments, For profit organizations other than small businesses, Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized), Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments), Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education, Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education, Private institutions of higher education, Public and State controlled institutions of higher education, Small businesses, Special district governments, State governments, Other

### Other

For purposes of this solicitation, the term "State" means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virginia Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Foreign governments, foreign organizations, and foreign colleges and universities are not eligible to apply. Federal agencies are eligible to apply. (Any award made to a federal agency will be made as an inter-agency reimbursable agreement.)

Applicants must be, or be partnered with, publicly funded forensic science laboratories that are currently accredited by an independent accrediting or certifying forensic science organization. Publicly funded forensic science laboratories include state, regional, county, municipal, and tribal agencies.

To advance Executive Order 13929 Safe Policing for Safe Communities, as of October 28, 2020, the Attorney General determined that all state, local, and university or college law enforcement agencies must be certified by an approved independent credentialing body or have started the certification process to be allocated FY 2021 DOJ discretionary grant funding, as either a recipient or a subrecipient. For detailed information on this new certification requirement, please visit <https://cops.usdoj.gov/SafePolicingEO>.

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

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

NIJ may elect to fund applications submitted under this FY 2021 solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on, among other

considerations, the merit of the applications and on the availability of appropriations.

## Contact Information

For technical assistance with submitting the **SF-424 and SF- LLL** in Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, at [Grants.gov customer support webpage](#), or email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The Grants.gov Support Hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

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

An applicant that experiences unforeseen Grants.gov or JustGrants technical issues beyond its control that prevent it from submitting its application by the deadline must email the National Criminal Justice Reference Service Response Center (Response Center) at [grants@ncjrs.gov](mailto:grants@ncjrs.gov) **within 24 hours after the application deadline** to request approval to submit its application after the deadline.

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

## Submission Information

In FY 2021, applications will be submitted to DOJ in a **NEW** two-step process.

**Step 1:** Applicants will submit an **SF-424 and an SF-LLL** in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>. To register in Grants.gov, applicants will need to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM) registration or renewal.

**Step 2:** Applicants will submit the **full application** including attachments in JustGrants at [JustGrants.usdoj.gov](https://www.justgrants.usdoj.gov).

To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline.

OJP encourages applicants to review, the "How to Apply" section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

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# Program Description

## Overview

The Department of Justice is committed to advancing work that promotes civil rights, increases access to justice, supports crime victims, protects the public from crime and evolving threats, and builds trust between law enforcement and the community.

The purpose of the CFDA 16.560 (the *National Institute of Justice Research, Evaluation, and Development Projects Grants* program) is to foster research to develop new knowledge and tools to address the challenges of crime and justice in the United States.

With this solicitation, NIJ seeks proposals for rigorous research and evaluation projects that will:

1. Identify and inform the forensic community of best practices through the evaluation of existing laboratory protocols.
2. Have a direct and immediate impact on laboratory efficiency and assist in making laboratory policy decisions.

The intent of this program is to direct the findings of the research and evaluation toward the identification of the most efficient, accurate, reliable, and cost-effective methods for the identification, analysis, and interpretation of physical evidence for criminal justice purposes. Projects should address the challenges and needs of the forensic science community, including but not limited to, the operational needs discussed at the 2020 TWG meeting, which may be found on [NIJ.ojp.gov](http://nij.ojp.gov). NIJ's Forensic Science Technology Working Group (TWG) assists in identifying and prioritizing operational needs and requirements of the field, which are intended to facilitate proposal development. Additional research needs of the forensic science community can be found at the Organization of Scientific Area Committees [website](#).

## Statutory Authority

Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (sections 201 and 202).

## Specific Information

This solicitation seeks applications for research and evaluation studies to produce practical knowledge that has the potential to improve the examination and interpretation of physical evidence in forensic science laboratories.

Proposals are expected to identify the forensic science discipline(s) intended to benefit from the project. The forensic science discipline(s) should be listed in the key words on the title page. Some of the forensic science disciplines are listed below.

- DNA and forensic biology (<http://strbase.nist.gov>, <http://www.swgdam.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/organization-scientific-area-committees-forensic-science/biologydna-scientific-area-committee>).
- Forensic crime scene analysis (<https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/crime-scenedeath-investigation-scientific-area-committee>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/organization-scientific-area-committees-forensic-science/crime-scene-investigation>).
- Forensic anthropology and forensic odontology (<https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/anthropology-subcommittee>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/odontology-subcommittee>).
- Bloodstain pattern analysis (<https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/bloodstain-pattern-analysis-subcommittee>).
- Seized drugs (<http://www.swgdrug.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/seized-drugs-subcommittee>).
- Fire debris analysis and arson scene investigations (<http://www.swgfex.com>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/fire-and-explosion-investigation-subcommittee>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/fire-debris-and-explosives-subcommittee>).
- Firearms and toolmark identification (<https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/firearms-and-toolmarks-subcommittee>).
- Latent print (<http://www.swgfast.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/organization-scientific-area-committees-forensic-science/friction-ridge-subcommittee>).
- Shoeprint/tire tread examination (<https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/footwear-and-tire-subcommittee>).
- Questioned documents (<http://www.swgdoc.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/forensic-document-examination-subcommittee>).
- Trace evidence (<http://www.asteetrace.org/>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/sac-chemistryinstrumental-analysis>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/materials-trace-subcommittee>).
- Forensic toxicology (<https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/toxicology-subcommittee>).
- Medicolegal death investigations, including forensic pathology (<http://www.swgmdi.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/crime-scenedeath-investigation-scientific-area-committee>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/medicolegal-death-investigation-subcommittee>).
- Digital/multimedia evidence (<https://www.swgde.org/>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/digitalmultimedia-scientific-area-committee>).
- Wildlife forensics (<https://www.nist.gov/topics/organization-scientific-area-committees-forensic-science/wildlife-forensics-subcommittee>).

## Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline

## Goals and Objectives

NIJ's Research and Evaluation for the Testing and Interpretation of Physical Evidence in Publicly Funded Forensic Laboratories program is intended to meet the following goals and objectives. **Proposals should address at least one of the goals specified below:**

### 1. Assessing Existing Laboratory Protocols – Improve the understanding of scientific rationale underpinning existing laboratory processes.

To achieve this goal, applicants should perform research and evaluation of existing laboratory schemes and methods to determine possible improvements. Examples of such projects include:

- Evaluation of minimum acceptance criteria of analytical data, such as mass spectra, generated in case samples.
- Evaluation of accuracy gained from additional orthogonal testing of controlled substance samples.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of a blind verification program for technical reviews; and
- Evaluation of implementation of software and statistical methods used for the interpretation of DNA mixtures.

### 2. Evaluating Emerging Methods – Assess the value of emerging laboratory processes.

To achieve this goal, applicants should conduct research to compare emerging methods to those currently used to accomplish the same purpose in publicly funded forensic laboratories. These evaluations should consider factors such as accuracy, reliability, cost, and analysis time. Examples of such projects include:

- Comparison of a newly developed comprehensive method to existing multi-step method(s).
- Comparison of methodology or instrumentation new to the laboratory or field to instrumentation that is currently used in the laboratory.

Proposals should employ a scientific approach to determine how to assess the testing and processing of physical evidence. These approaches should take into consideration general variables, such as accuracy, reliability, cost-effectiveness, and efficiency, and make clear which of these aspects may need improvement. Every effort should be made to validate the research using actual casework samples. If this is not possible, applications should describe barriers preventing the use of casework samples and detailed methodology for creating realistic proxy samples.

NIJ also strongly encourages applicants to seek guidance from a statistician in order to ensure that rigorous testing measures are employed. Areas that may benefit from a statistician include, but are not limited to, research design (e.g., experimental design, planning sample size or sampling designs, designing data collection methods), selection and application of appropriate statistical methods, and how to use software to perform data analyses. Such associations foster a greater understanding of the testing and validation issues unique to the field of forensic science, and may strengthen the scope of the proposed application.

**Researchers who have developed methods and/or technologies that are ready for evaluation in forensic lab practice, including previous and current NIJ research grantees, are strongly encouraged to apply.**

Information on this program (including previously funded projects) can be found at: <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/forensics/research-and-evaluation-publicly-funded-forensic-laboratories>.

In order to foster collaboration between emerging forensic science researchers and forensic science laboratories, as well as to ensure the direct applicability of the results of this research to lab practice, non-publicly funded laboratory applicants must demonstrate a partnership with an appropriate lab.

To assist researchers in identifying appropriate practitioner collaborators, NIJ has developed a site for labs to indicate their interest in participating in research. Interested labs and researchers are encouraged to visit <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/connecting-researchers-publicly-funded-forensic-laboratories> for more information.

NIJ recognizes the importance of replication as a fundamental part of the scientific process. To some extent, all research incorporates a measure of replication by building on past work. Nevertheless, *particularly in the case of groundbreaking, surprising, or controversial results*, there may be a need for an expedited replication timeline. This may be especially true for research conclusions with a high potential for immediate impact or widespread adoption. Consistent with the recommendations of the scientific community,<sup>[1]</sup> NIJ will consider funding replication studies of published results that have, or have the potential to, significantly impact forensic science policy and practice but have not been independently verified. If an applicant proposes a replication study, strong justification should be given for why the original results might be called into question or why the consequences of laboratories acting on the original conclusions are potentially so significant as to merit replication.

Applicants who wish to propose a collaboration in the form of a subaward as part of their application are advised to consult the section of this solicitation, which describes required documents for proposals involving subrecipients.

## Deliverables

**Final Research Report.** Any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be expected to submit a final research report. Additional information on the final research report requirement for the solicitation is posted on the [Research, Development, and Evaluation Grant Award Requirements](#) section on NIJ's webpage. Additionally, grantees under this solicitation will be expected to include all methods, standard operating procedures (SOPs), and validation summaries resulting from these awards. All such summaries, SOPs, and methods produced as a result of each award under this solicitation may be made publicly available by NIJ.

In addition to these deliverables (and the required reports and data on performance measures), NIJ expects scholarly products to result from each award under this solicitation, taking the form of one or more published, peer-reviewed, scientific journal articles, and/or (if appropriate) book chapter(s) or book(s) in the academic press, technological prototypes, patented inventions, databases, standards, or similar scientific products. Awardees are encouraged to publish their research using open access options. Grant funds may be used for costs associated with open access publication.

NIJ expects that there will be an equal effort to make the research findings accessible to practitioner and policymaker audiences through articles in trade publications, the development of training manuals, policy briefs, conferences, webinars, and articles for newspapers or magazines.

Some projects may be chosen for technology evaluation or technology transition activities. More information, including examples of previous workshops and evaluations, can be found through the following links: <http://www.nij.gov/topics/forensics/lab-operations/Pages/workshops.aspx> and <http://www.forensiccoe.org>.

The Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables are directly related to the performance measures that demonstrate the results of the work completed.

## Federal Award Information

### Awards, Amounts and Durations

#### Anticipated Number of Awards

5

#### Anticipated Maximum Dollar Amount of Awards

\$500,000.00

#### Period of Performance Start Date

1/1/22 12:00 AM

#### Period of Performance Duration (Months)

60

#### Anticipated Total Amount to be Awarded Under Solicitation

\$1,500,000.00

### Additional Information

Maximum dollar amount for each award: NIJ funding for an individual research or development project rarely exceeds \$500,000 annually. In FY 2020, the average forensic science research and development award under this solicitation was approximately \$240,000 per year. Information on previous years' awards is provided for reference. Applicants should propose costs using calculations based on the specific activities proposed in the narratives. Costs estimates should be focused on maximizing the potential for success of the proposed project, rather than past averages. Period of performance start date: January 1, 2022 (Applicants that are Federal agencies may propose a start date as early as October 1, 2021.) Period of performance duration: To be determined by the period of performance of awarded applications. Project periods under this program typically range between one and three years. Successful applicants will be expected to complete the work proposed within a five-year period of performance. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit realistic proposals, including a reasonable project timeline and end date, as project extensions may not be granted. Applications proposing research involving partnerships with other agencies, such as publicly funded forensic laboratories, must include a strong letter of cooperation/support or administrative agreement, signed by an appropriate decision-making authority from each proposed, partnering agency. If selected for award, grantees will be expected to have a formal agreement in place with partnering agencies by January 1, 2022.

### Availability of Funds

This solicitation, and awards (if any are made) under this solicitation, are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by the agency or by law. In addition, nothing in this solicitation is intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

### Types of Awards

NIJ expects to make awards under this solicitation as grants. See the "Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements" section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for a brief discussion of important statutes, regulations, and award conditions that apply to many (or in some cases, all) OJP grants (and cooperative agreements).

**Please note:** Any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be required to comply with DOJ regulations on confidentiality and protection of human subjects. See "Requirements related to Research" under "[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements – FY 2021 Awards](#)" in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

### Financial Management and System of Internal Controls

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

### **Budget Information**

If the applicant is proposing a project that reasonably could be conducted in discrete phases, with each phase resulting in completion of one or more significant, defined milestones, then NIJ strongly recommends that the applicant structure the application — specifically including the narrative, expected scholarly products, timelines/milestones, and budget detail worksheet and budget narrative — to clearly define each phase. (This is particularly the case if the applicant proposes a project that will exceed — in cost or the length of the period of performance — the amount or length of time anticipated for an individual award (or awards) under this solicitation.) Given limitations on the availability to NIJ of funds for awards for research, development, and evaluation, this information will assist NIJ in considering whether partial funding of applications would be productive. (If, in FY 2021, NIJ elects to fund only certain phases of a proposed project, the expected scholarly products from the partial-funding award may, in some cases, vary from those described above.)

NIJ may elect to fund applications submitted under this FY 2021 solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on, among other considerations, the merit of the applications and on the availability of appropriations.

What will not be funded:

- Applications primarily to purchase equipment, materials, or supplies, or to contract or purchase training, validation, or other services that will complete the majority of the proposed research project. (A budget may include these items if they are necessary to conduct research, development, demonstration, evaluation, or analysis.) Proposals that include equipment purchases should include a discussion of how federally-funded equipment is proposed to be used after the funded work has been completed and/or the project period has ended. Note that OJP may issue specific equipment disposition instructions in appropriate circumstances.
- Applications that are not responsive to the purposes of this specific solicitation. This includes:
  - Proposals that do not contain a research component.
  - Proposals that do not propose assessing current lab processes, or otherwise do not respond to the specific goals of this solicitation.
  - Proposals that do not clearly address criminal justice concerns in the United States.
- Work that will be funded under another specific solicitation.
- Costs associated with conducting conferences. A conference is a symposium, seminar, workshop, or any other organized and formal meeting, whether conducted face-to-face or via the Internet, where individuals assemble (or meet virtually) to exchange information and views or explore or clarify a defined subject, problem, or area of knowledge, whether or not a published report results from such meeting. A meeting where a gathering discusses general matters as part of a normal course of doing business is not considered a conference. Funds may be used to attend conferences for the purposes of disseminating research findings.
- Proposals with the sole purpose of processing or analyzing casework samples.

### **Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement**

See “Cofunding” paragraph under item 5 (“Budget and Associated Documentation”) under “Content of Application Submission” in Application and Submission Information.

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

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

### **Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation: Waiver**

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

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

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

### **Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)**

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

## **Eligibility Information**

For eligibility information, see the title page.

For information on cost sharing or match requirements, see “Content of Application Submission” in Application and Submission Information.

## **Application and Submission Information**

### **Content of Application Submission**

The following application elements MUST be included in the application submission for an application to meet the basic minimum requirements (BMR) to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding:



- Proposal Narrative,
- Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (web-based form), and
- Curriculum Vitae/Resumes for Key Personnel. (For purposes of this solicitation, “key personnel” means the principal investigator, and all co-principal investigators and other significant contributors.)
- Proof of Forensic Laboratory Accreditation for the involved publicly funded forensic laboratory.

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

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

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

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

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

### Standard Applicant Information (JustGrants 424 and General Agency Information)

The Standard Applicant Information section of the JustGrants application is pre-populated with the SF-424 data submitted in Grants.gov. Applicants will need to review the Standard Applicant Information in JustGrants and make edits as needed. Within this section, applicants will need to: add zip codes for areas affected by the project; confirm their Authorized Representative; and verify the organization’s legal name and address.

### Proposal Abstract

The proposal abstract is a very important part of the application and serves as an introduction to the proposed project. NIJ uses the proposal abstract for a number of purposes, including assignment of the application to an appropriate review panel. If the application is funded, the proposal abstract typically will become public information and be used to describe the project.

A proposal abstract (no more than 400 words) summarizing the proposed project including primary activities, products and deliverables, the service area, and who will benefit from the proposed project, will be completed in the JustGrants Web-based form.

### Proposal Narrative

The proposal narrative should be submitted as an attachment with numbered pages in JustGrants. The attached document should be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point font; have no less than 1-inch margins; and should not exceed 14 pages, of which a **minimum** of 7 pages should be dedicated to the description of the project/program design and implementation. If included in the main body of the proposal narrative, tables, charts, figures, and other illustrations count toward the 14-page limit for the narrative section. If the proposal narrative fails to comply with these length-related restrictions, NIJ may negatively consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The following sections should be included as part of the proposal narrative<sup>[2]</sup>:

a. Title Page (not counted against the proposal narrative page limit)

The title page should include:

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

b. Resubmit Response (if applicable) (not counted against the proposal narrative page limit.)

If an applicant is resubmitting an application previously submitted to NIJ, but not funded, the applicant should clearly indicate this. A statement should be provided, no more than two pages, addressing: (1) the title, submission date, and NIJ-assigned application number of the previous application, and (2) a brief summary of revisions to the application, including responses to previous feedback received from NIJ.

c. Table of Contents and Figures (not counted against the proposal narrative page limit)

d. Main Body

1. Statement of the problem.

The statement of the problem should address the need for research in this area. Applicants should discuss current gaps in data, research, and knowledge, including those for particular justice sectors, for certain populations, and to answer questions relevant to current policy and practice needs and public interests. It is not uncommon for multiple problems to exist simultaneously (for

example, there may be a criminal justice problem affecting public safety, a current technical challenge/need identified by forensic practitioners, as well as a scientific/technology gap between the current state of the art and a desired solution) and applicants should discuss each of these clearly and justify the importance of the separate issues. As part of this discussion, applicants should present a review of previous literature and discuss previous research related to these problems. The statement of the problem should:

- Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field proposed.
- Explain how the proposed project may improve forensic practice through scientific knowledge and/or technical capability. Describe how concepts, methods, technologies, or services that drive the forensic science field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved.

## 2. Project Design and Implementation. (This section should account for a minimum of 7 pages of the main body of the narrative.)

Applicants should provide a detailed description of the strategies to implement this research project and address the research questions. Design elements should follow directly from the research project's goals and objectives and address the program-specific information noted in the solicitation. Applicants should describe the research methodology and analysis plan in detail and demonstrate the validity and usefulness of the data they will collect. Applicants should consider the rigor and soundness of the methodology and analytical and technical approaches for the proposed research and address the feasibility of the proposed project and potential challenges or problems in carrying out the activities. This section should:

- State concisely the goals of the proposed research.
- Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Describe the experimental design and methods proposed and how they will achieve robust and unbiased results. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted as well as any resource sharing plans as appropriate.
- Power and Effect Size: Use power analyses to describe the range of effect sizes detectable by the study. Address relevant features of the analytic plan, such as the model(s) to be tested, the extent of multiple testing and what significance level would be used for testing. Include all appropriate parameters. If the study design requires separate analysis of subject groups, provide power analyses for each category. If there is a plan to test for environment effects, address the power for detection of these effects.
- Data Analyses: Provide a thorough plan for data analyses. Include: analytical approaches to be used and their justification; plans for quality control analyses; methods to control for possible confounding effects; how false positive rates will be controlled in light of multiple testing; etc. If there is a plan to analyze the data obtained with earlier data, or to perform comparisons to determine success, describe your strategy for that process.

## 3. Potential Impact.

Applicants should describe the potential impact of the research and how it may inform or improve criminal or juvenile justice-related policy, practice, or theory in the United States. Applicants should:

- Summarize the expected outcome(s), including the impact that the results of the proposed research will exert on the discipline(s) involved.
- Explain the criminal justice significance of the proposed study.
- Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current forensic practice paradigms.

The discussion of impact should include a discussion of the deliverables, including planned scholarly products indicated in the specific information and a plan for dissemination to appropriate audiences. Applicants should identify plans to produce or make available to broader interested practitioners and policy makers in a form that is designed to be readily accessible and useful to them. Awardees are encouraged to publish their research using open access options. **Grant funds may be used for costs associated with open access publication.**

## 4. Capabilities and Competencies.

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

- Facilities & Other Resources: Describe how the scientific environment in which the research will be done contributes to the probability of success (e.g., institutional support, physical resources, and intellectual rapport). In describing the scientific environment in which the work will be done, discuss ways in which the proposed studies will benefit from unique features of the scientific environment or subject populations or will employ useful collaborative arrangements. If there are multiple performance sites, describe the resources available at each site.
- Equipment: List major items of equipment already available for this project and, if appropriate identify location and pertinent capabilities.
- Senior/Key Personnel Profile: Describe each senior/key personnel member's role in the project and why the individual is well-suited for that role. The relevant factors may include: aspects of past training; previous experimental work on this specific topic or related topics; technical expertise; collaborators or scientific environment; and/or past performance in this or related fields. Senior/key personnel are defined as all individuals who contribute in a substantive, meaningful way to the scientific development or execution of the project, whether or not salaries are requested. Consultants should be included if they meet this definition.

- Principal Investigator (PI) Profile should be listed first.
- Senior/Key Personnel Profile: Any remaining senior/key personnel profiles should be listed in alphabetical order. While alphabetical order is preferred, it is not required. However, be aware that these profiles will appear in the application in the order provided by the applicant. Therefore, peer reviewers will see them in the order presented. Those with a postdoctoral/postgraduate role should be included.
- Other Significant Contributors (OSCs): OSCs are those individuals who commit to contribute to the scientific development or execution of the project but do not commit any specified measurable effort (i.e., person months) to the project. These individuals are typically presented at effort of "zero person months" or "as needed." Individuals with measurable effort may not be listed as Other Significant Contributors (OSCs). Consultants should be included if they meet the OSC definition. OSCs should be listed after all senior/key persons.
- Experience and capacity to work with the proposed data sources in the conduct of similar research efforts.
- Experience and capacity to design and implement rigorous research and data analysis projects.
- Experience producing and disseminating meaningful deliverables.

Applicants should also outline the management plan and organization that connects to the goals and objectives of the project.

5. Appendices (not counted against the 14-page proposal narrative page limit) include:

- The project management plan.
- If the application (including the budget) identifies any proposed non-competitive agreements that are or may be considered procurement "contracts" (rather than subawards), for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements, the applicant also must list the entities with which the applicant proposes to contract.
- List of other agencies, organizations, or funding sources to which this application has been submitted (if applicable).

Note: applicants are **not** required to submit performance data with the application. Rather, 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.

OJP will require each successful applicant to submit regular performance data that demonstrate the results of the work carried out under the award. The performance data directly relate to the goals, objectives, and deliverables identified under "Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables."

A list of performance measure questions for this program can be found on page 16.

Applicants can also visit OJP's performance measurement page at [www.ojp.gov/performance](http://www.ojp.gov/performance) for an overview of performance measurement activities at OJP.

Award recipients will be required to submit performance measure data in quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, and the Final Research Report. Further guidance on the post-award submission process will be provided, if selected for award.

### **Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline**

Applicants will submit the project's goals, objectives, deliverables, and timelines in the JustGrants Web-based form. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

### **Budget and Associated Documentation**

#### **Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (Web-based Form)**

Applicants will complete the JustGrants web-based budget form. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information. NIJ encourages the budgeting of grant funds for open access publication costs.

The following paragraph (on "Cofunding") expressly modifies the "Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement" provisions in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide. The applicant is to follow the guidance in the following paragraph instead of the guidance stated under the "Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement" heading in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

**Cofunding:** An award made by NIJ under this solicitation may account for up to 100 percent of the total cost of the project. The application should indicate whether it is feasible for the applicant to contribute cash, facilities, or services as non-federal support for the project. The application should identify generally any such contributions that the applicant expects to make and the proposed budget should indicate in detail which items, if any, will be supported with non-federal contributions.

For additional match information, see the "Cost Sharing or Match Requirement" section under Federal Award Information.

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.

### **Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)**

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

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

Applicants will download the questionnaire in JustGrants and submit by uploading the completed questionnaire as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

### **Additional Application Components**

Applicants will attach the additional requested documentation in JustGrants.

### **Curriculum Vitae or Resumes**

Curriculum vitae or resumes of the principal investigator and all co-principal investigators. In addition, curriculum vitae, resume, or biographical sketches of all other individuals (regardless of "investigator" status) who will be significantly involved in substantive aspects of the proposed project (including, for example, individuals such as statisticians used to conduct proposed data analysis). NIJ encourages use of the SciENCv standard format biosketch (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/>). Attach this information as a separate PDF file titled "CVs of Key Personnel."

### **Tribal Authorizing Resolution**

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

### **Timeline Form**

Proposed project timeline and expected milestones.

### **Letters of Support**

Letters of cooperation/support or administrative agreements from organizations collaborating in the project, such as universities, publicly funded forensic laboratories, law enforcement and correctional agencies (if applicable).

### **Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity Statement**

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

### **Bibliography/reference**

Bibliography/references. Provide a bibliography of any references cited in the Project Narrative.

### **Any tools/instruments, questionnaires, tables/chart/graphs, or maps**

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.

### **List of Individuals in the Application**

To assist OJP in assessing actual or apparent conflicts of interest (including such conflicts on the part of prospective reviewers of the application), provide a complete list of the individuals named or otherwise identified anywhere in the application (including in the budget or in any other attachment) who will or may work (or advise or consult) on the proposed research, development, or evaluation project. Applicants should use the "[Proposed Project Staff, Affiliation, and Roles](#)" form available on the NIJ webpage to prepare this list.

### **Human Subjects Protection**

Human Subjects Protection paperwork (documentation and forms related to Institutional Review Board [IRB] review). See <https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/human-subjects-and-privacy-protection>. **Note:** Final IRB approval is not required at the time an application is submitted.

### **Privacy Certificate**

Privacy Certificate (for further guidance go to <https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/confidentiality-and-privacy-protections> and <https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/model-privacy-certificate>).

### **Request to Use Incentives or Stipends**

Applicants proposing to use incentives or stipends payments as part of their research project design, must submit an incentive or stipend approval request, as a separate document, according to the requirements set forth at <https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/participant-support-costs-and-incentives-social-scienceresearch>.

### **Data Archiving Plan(s)**

NIJ considers the archiving and sharing of unique research resources developed through NIJ-sponsored research an important means

to enhance the value and further the advancement of the research. When resources have been developed with NIJ funds and the associated research findings published or provided to NIJ, it is important that they be made readily available for research purposes to qualified individuals within the scientific community.

Applications should include a brief plan about proposed data management and archiving for all files and documentation necessary for others to reproduce or replicate the project's findings. **If awarded, applicants should expect to be required to archive data in accordance with this plan as approved by NIJ.** Pertinent files and documentation may include, among other things, qualitative and quantitative data produced, instrumentation and data collection forms, codebook(s), any specialized programming code necessary to reproduce all constructed measures and the original data analysis, description of necessary de-identification procedures, and (when required) a copy of the privacy certificate and informed consent protocols. Attach this information as a separate PDF file titled "Data Archiving Plan(s)."

## **Consortium/Contractual Arrangements**

Explain the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative arrangements to be made between the applicant organization and the consortium organization(s).

## **Proof of Forensic Laboratory Accreditation**

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 American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD-LAB), Forensic Quality Services (FQS), the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA), or other appropriate accrediting bodies. Applicants should list the name of their accrediting body in the key words on the title page.

## **Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist - National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)**

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](#);
- 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. For more information about NEPA and NIJ's NEPA Process, please go to <https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/national-environmental-policy-act-nepa>.

## **Disclosures and Assurances**

Applicants will complete the following disclosures and assurances.

### **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**

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

### **DOJ Certified Standard Assurances**

See the DOJ Certified Standard Assurances in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

### **Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items**

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

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

Applicants will review and accept the DOJ Certified Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements. See [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

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

If applicable, applicants will submit as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional

information. 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.

## How to Apply

Applicants will submit an **SF-424** and an **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>.

Applicants will submit the **full application** including attachments in JustGrants at [JustGrants.usdoj.gov](https://www.justgrants.usdoj.gov).

For additional information, see the "How to Apply" section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

## Submission Dates and Time

The **SF-424** and the **SF-LLL** will be submitted in Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on June 3, 2021. 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.

The **full application** will be submitted in JustGrants by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on June 10, 2021.

To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline.

## Application Review Information

### Review Criteria

#### a. Scored Review Criteria

Applications that meet basic minimum requirements will be evaluated by peer reviewers. Applications will be evaluated on how the proposed project/program addresses the following criteria:

1. Statement of the Problem (15%)
  - Demonstrated understanding of the need to determine and employ best processes for a procedure currently used by a forensic science field/discipline.
  - Demonstrated awareness of the state of current protocols widely used by the forensic science community within the proposed forensic science discipline of the application.
2. Project Design and Implementation (quality and technical merit) (40%).
  - Feasibility of proposed project.
  - Soundness of methods and analytic and technical approach to addressing the stated aim(s) of the proposed project. The overall strategy, methodology, and analyses should be well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project.
  - Feasibility of proposed project. Detailed description and justification of the sample type and sample size to be tested and approaches for data analysis are thorough and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project.
  - Awareness of potential pitfalls of proposed project design and feasibility of proposed actions to minimize and/or mitigate them.
  - Feasibility of completing the deliverables noted in the solicitation.
3. Potential Impact (30%)
  - Potential to determine and increase the awareness of best practices for the evaluation and interpretation of physical evidence for the forensic science community.
  - Potential for significantly improved understanding of the scientific rationale underpinning existing laboratory processes.
  - Potential for innovative solution to protocols to increase the efficiency, accuracy, reliability or cost-effectiveness for the analysis and interpretation of physical evidence.
  - Proposed plan to produce or to make available to broader interested audiences, such as criminal/juvenile justice practitioners or policymakers as well as practitioners in other, related fields, summary information from the planned scholarly products of the project.
4. Capabilities and Competencies (capabilities, demonstrated productivity, and experience of the applicant organization and proposed project staff) (15%)
  - Qualifications and experience of proposed project staff (that is, the principal investigator, any and all co-principal investigators, and all other individuals (and organizations) identified in the application (regardless of "investigator" status) who will be significantly involved in substantive aspects of the proposed project).
  - Demonstrated ability of the applicant organization to implement the proposed strategies and manage the effort.
  - Relationship between the capabilities/competencies of the proposed project staff (including the applicant organization) and the scope and strategies of the proposed project.
  - Strength of the scientific environment (e.g., laboratory support, equipment and other physical resources, or collaborative arrangements) in which the work will be done and its contribution to the probability of success.
5. Budget (0%)



In addition, peer reviewers will consider and may comment on the following additional items in the context of scientific and technical merit.

- Alignment of the proposed budget with proposed project activities.
- Total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit (cost effectiveness).
- Appropriateness of the budget relative to the level of effort.
- Use of existing resources to conserve costs.

#### **b. Additional Review Criteria**

Other important considerations for NIJ include geographic diversity, strategic priorities, available funding, past performance, the planned scholarly products, and the extent to which the Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (web-based form) accurately explain project costs that are reasonable, necessary, and otherwise allowable under federal law and applicable federal cost principles.

### **Review Process**

Applications submitted under this solicitation that meet basic minimum requirements, will be evaluated for technical merit by a peer review panel(s) in accordance with OJP peer review policy and procedures using the stated review criteria above.

OJP screens applications to ensure they meet the basic minimum requirements prior to conducting peer review. 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 necessary to meet the basic minimum requirements.
- The application, if submitted by an applicant that is a DOJ High Risk Grantee, or is designated "high risk" by a federal grant-making agency outside of DOJ, must not have been determined by the NIJ Director 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.

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, FAPIIS).

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

All final award decisions will be made by Director of the National Institute of Justice, who may take into account not only peer review ratings and NIJ recommendations, but also other factors as indicated in this section. In addition to peer review ratings, considerations for award recommendations and decisions may include, but are not limited to, planned scholarly products, proposed budgets, past performance (including scholarly products) under prior NIJ and OJP awards, research independence and integrity, strategic priorities, and available funding when making awards.

## **Federal Award Administration Information**

### **Federal Award Notices**

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

### **Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements**

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the OJP-approved application, the recipient must comply with all award conditions, and all applicable requirements of federal statutes and regulations (including applicable requirements referred to in the assurances and certifications executed in connection with award acceptance).

For additional information on these legal requirements, see the "Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements" section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

### **Information Technology (IT) Security Clauses**

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

### **General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements**

In addition to the deliverables described in the Program Description section, any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be required to submit certain reports and data.

**Required reports.** Recipients typically must submit quarterly financial reports, quarterly, *semi-annual* progress reports, final financial and progress reports, final research reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements or specific award conditions. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent. (In appropriate cases, OJP may require additional reports.)

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

## Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

For questions directed to the Federal Awarding Agency, see NCJRS contact information on page 2.

For contact information for Grants.gov, see page 2.

## Other Information

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

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

### Provide Feedback to OJP

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

## Performance Measures

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Data Recipient Provides
<p>Conduct research in science, technology, engineering, and/or mathematics having clear implications for criminal or juvenile justice policy and practice in the United States.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quality of the research as demonstrated by the scholarly products that result in whole or in part from work funded under the NIJ award, such as published, peer-reviewed, scientific journal articles, and/or (as appropriate for the funded project) law review journal articles, book chapter(s) or book(s) in the academic press, technological prototypes, patented inventions, or similar scientific products.</li> <li>2. Relevance to the needs of the field as measured by whether the project's substantive scope did not deviate from the funded project or any subsequent agency-approved modifications to the scope.</li> <li>3. Quality of management as measured by such factors as whether significant project milestones were achieved, reporting and other deadlines were met, and costs remained within approved limits.</li> <li>4. Number of technologies fielded as a result (in whole or in part) of work funded under the NIJ award.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quarterly financial reports, semi-annual and final progress reports, and products of the work performed under the NIJ award (including, at minimum, a final research report). If applicable, an annual audit report.</li> <li>2. List of citation(s) to all scholarly products that resulted in whole or in part from work funded under the NIJ award.</li> <li>3. If applicable, each data set that resulted in whole or in part from work funded under the NIJ award.</li> <li>4. Description of all technologies fielded as a result (in whole or in part) of work funded under the NIJ award.</li> </ol>

## Application Checklist

### Research and Evaluation for the Testing and Interpretation of Physical Evidence in Publicly Funded Forensic Laboratories, Fiscal Year 2021

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

#### What an Applicant Must Do:



*Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:*

- Acquire a DUNS Number (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

*To Register with Grants.gov:*

- Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

*To Find Funding Opportunity:*

- Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov
- Access Funding Opportunity and Application Package (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) (optional) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)
- Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, reporting available at [ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm](#) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

*Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements:*

- Review the [“Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2021 Awards”](#) in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

*Scope Requirement:*

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

*Eligibility Requirement:*

- State governments
- Special district governments
- City or township governments
- Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
- County governments
- Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)
- Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)
- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Private institutions of higher education
- For profit organizations other than small businesses
- Small businesses

For purposes of this solicitation, the term “State” means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virginia Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Foreign governments, foreign organizations, and foreign colleges and universities are not eligible to apply. Federal agencies are eligible to apply. (Any award made to a federal agency will be made as an inter-agency reimbursable agreement.)

Applicants must be, or be partnered with, publicly funded forensic science laboratories that are currently accredited by an independent accrediting or certifying forensic science organization. Publicly funded forensic science laboratories include state, regional, county, municipal, and tribal agencies.

- Submit **SF-424** and **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov

*After SF-424 and SF-LLL Submission in Grants.gov, Receive Grants.gov Email Notifications That:*

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

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

- Contact the NCJRS Response Center regarding technical difficulties (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

*Receive email notification to complete application in JustGrants:*

- Complete Application in JustGrants

**Content of Application Submission:**

The following items are critical application elements required to pass Basic Minimum Requirements review. An application that OJP determines does not include the application elements that must be included in the application submission in order for the application to meet the basic minimum requirements, will neither proceed to peer review, nor receive further consideration.

- Proposal Narrative, (see page 9),
- Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (Web-based form) (see page 11),
- Curriculum Vitae/Resumes for Key Personnel. (see page 12), and
- Proof of Forensic Laboratory Accreditation (see page 13)

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**Content of Application Submission**

- Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) in Grants.gov
- Standard Applicant Information (SF-424 info from Grants.gov)
- Proposal Abstract
- Proposal Narrative

**Budget and Associated Documentation**

- Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (Web-based form)
- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

**Additional Application Components**

- Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist (NEPA) (see page 13)
- Data Archiving Plan
- Bibliography/references
- Any tools/instruments, questionnaires, tables/charts/graphs, or maps pertaining to the proposed study that supplement those in the narrative
- List (to the extent known) of all proposed project staff members
- Proposed project timeline and expected milestones
- Human Subjects Protection Paperwork
- Privacy Certificate
- List of any previous and current NIJ awards to applicant organization and investigator(s)
- Letters of cooperation/support or administrative agreements from organizations collaborating in the project, or letters of intent to establish agreements (if applicable)

**Disclosures and Assurances**

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

*Submit Application in JustGrants:*

- Application has been successfully submitted in JustGrants

*If No JustGrants Application Submission, Validation, or Error Notifications are Received:*

- Contact [JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov](mailto:JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov) or 833-872-5175 regarding technical difficulties

## Endnote

[1] <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/25303/reproducibility-and-replicability-in-science>

[2] As noted earlier, if the proposed program or project reasonably could be conducted in discrete phases, with each phase resulting in completion of one or more significant, defined milestones, then NIJ strongly recommends that the applicant structure the application – specifically including the narrative, expected scholarly products, timelines/milestones, and budget detail worksheet and budget narrative – to set out each phase clearly. (In appropriate cases, the expected scholarly product(s) from a particular phase may vary from those described above.) See generally “Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables” under “Specific Information,” above.