

NIJ Multisite Impact and Cost-Efficiency Evaluation of Veterans Treatment Courts , Fiscal Year 2022

Solicitation Post Date: October 29, 2021
Grants.Gov Registration Deadline: January 13, 2022
JustGrants Application Deadline: January 27, 2022

Webinar Presenters:

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Webinar Agenda

- NIJ's Courts Research Portfolio
- NIJ Multisite Impact and Cost-Efficiency Evaluation of Veterans Treatment Courts
- NIJ FY2022 Research Solicitation
- Research Partner Sites
- Application Guidance and Information Resources



NIJ's Courts Research Portfolio

- Problem Solving Courts Research
 - Multisite Evaluation of VTCs Process and Implementation Study
 - Multisite Adult Drug Court Evaluation
 - Evaluation of Adult Reentry Courts
- NIJ's Courts Research Strategic Plan, 2020-2024
 - Develop the courts workforce and enhance court workgroups
 - Advance court practice
 - Support the fair and impartial administration of justice
 - Promote data and research capacity building



NIJ

See NIJ Journal article, *NIJ's Courts Research: Examining Alternatives to Incarceration for Veterans and Other Policy Innovation (2021)*

NIJ Multisite Impact and Cost-Efficiency Evaluation of Veterans Treatment Courts

- **Field needs**

President's FY 2021 budget allocated \$25 million for VTC programs; funding supports VTC site-based awards and training and technical assistance (TTA)

- **DOJ Priorities**

Access to justice and to treatment; alternatives to incarceration; prevent misuse of stimulants and opioids, overdoses; ensure equity and inclusion in adult drug courts and VTCs, and expand access to services for veterans

- **BJA Goal**

Apply lessons from this project to guide VTC program policy

NIJ FY2022 Research Solicitation

- NIJ seeks applications for funding to conduct a multisite process, impact and cost-efficiency evaluation of veterans treatment courts (VTCs)
- NIJ will make one \$3 million award for a five-year cooperative agreement (7/1/2022 start date)
- The awardee will lead a cross-site evaluation in partnership with up to six large VTCs across the U.S.
- The research protocol will incorporate experimental design and other rigorous research methods
- The project begins with a 6-month Planning phase to confirm the research protocol including VTC site selection

Do not include site nominations or program letters of support.

NIJ FY2022 Research Solicitation (continued)

- Research questions will examine:
 - Program impact on relapse, recidivism, and other outcomes
 - For whom are programs effective
 - Which program elements are effective
 - Whether programs are cost-efficient
- Topics of interest include veterans* with violent offense histories, mental health and comorbidity, leveraging technology, peer mentoring, and equitable service access

*VTCs may admit active service members to programs

NIJ FY2022 Research Solicitation (continued)

- Project Phases:
 - Planning (6 months)
Finalize protocol including VTC site selection, site agreements, and Internal Review Board (IRB) approval
 - Research (54 months)
Complete site recruitment* and lead cross-site evaluation including research tasks, analysis, data and written deliverables, and dissemination

*Complete recruitment of 6 sites by Year 1; end site replacement by Year 2

NIJ FY2022 Research Solicitation (continued)

- Evaluation Research Tasks (VTC program and similar comparison group):
 - Process
Document program logic models, actual caseflow, services, and procedures to examine program retention and compliance, leveraging technology, peer mentoring, and equitable service access
 - Impact
Examine effects on public safety (arrests, violations, convictions, and incarcerations) and other outcomes (alcohol and other drug use, mental health, and housing stability)
 - Cost-Efficiency
Examine public investment and net benefits using primary information collection, secondary data sources, multiple outcomes of interest, and findings from process and impact evaluations

Collect equivalent information on comparison group

NIJ FY2022 Research Solicitation (continued)

- Research applications must:
 - State research questions that correspond to methods, data collection, analysis, and reporting plans
 - Detail qualitative and quantitative research methods – how will be implemented, and how information will be compiled and analyzed
 - Detail interview protocols including baseline and followup interviews; at least 75% response rates and bioassay alcohol and other drug tests
 - Describe protocol and budget options should field research plans need to be modified due to public health concerns
 - Describe potential archival data resources, and how validity and reliability concerns will be addressed
 - Demonstrate cultural competence in protocol and team capabilities; address geographic, racial/ethnic, language, and other diversity issues

Research Partner Sites

- Goal: cross-site evaluation with six large VTCs led by one research team
- VTC programs must be stable with 40 or more participants
- NIJ and BJA will schedule virtual visits with VTC program team and partners to explore feasibility of becoming a research partner site
- Each VTC must designate one program and one research representative
- VTC sites will be confirmed by the NIJ grantee at the Planning phase
- Site information collected for research purposes will remain confidential
- Each site will receive \$25,000 in each of the first two years for supporting research tasks
- Sites are encouraged to develop complementary research tasks with the research team if supplemental funds are available

History of BJA or other federal funding is NOT required .

Research Partner Sites (continued)

- **Are there any restrictions on the NIJ grant funds that sites receive for participating?** Funding is authorized for research support and services including data collection and technology.
- **How will the sites be selected?** The NIJ research team will confirm six large VTCs based on stable program operations and ability to participate.
- **What happens if a site drops out?** The cross-site evaluation team will address any issues, but participation is voluntary and a decision to stop cannot be penalized.
- **How long is the IRB approval process?** At least a month after the research protocol is finalized, depending on site agency review.
- **Will technical assistance be available to sites?** BJA encourages all VTCs to take advantage of training and technical assistance resources.*

*<https://bja.ojp.gov/program/adult-drug-court-grant-program/training-and-technical-assistance>

Research Application Guidance

- Budget – the \$3 million award will fund two phases:
 1. Planning \$100,000 (6 months)
 2. Research \$2,900,000 (54 months)
 - Of the \$2,900,000, each site will be paid \$25,000 in each of the first two years of the NIJ grant
 - Attach a budget worksheet and narrative that describes each phase
 - Research budget may be supplemented in future fiscal years, but do not include proposed new tasks in application budget

Do not include tasks beyond \$3 million in application budget

Research Application Guidance

- Deliverables
 - Monthly Project Update Calls
 - Project Startup Meeting
 - Revised Evaluation Plan
 - Draft Abstract, Executive Summary, and Report
 - NIJ Briefing
 - Final Abstract, Executive Summary, and Research Report
 - Professional Conference Presentations
 - Data Sets and Associated Files and Documentation
 - Other dissemination suggestions encouraged

Research Application Guidance (continued)

- Application Review Criteria
 - Problem Statement 15%
 - **Project Design and Implementation 50%**
 - **Capabilities and Competencies 25%**
 - Potential Impact (dissemination) 10%
 - Budget (comments only)
- Register and submit application ahead of deadlines:
 - Grants.Gov Registration Deadline: January 13, 2022
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- Label files and upload in correct section (Project Management Plan)
- Itemize appendices in a table of contents style
- Combine similar documents like resumes into a single file

Document application submission contents and timestamp

Information Resources

- NIJ solicitation webpage
<https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/o-nij-2022-171012>
- Potential Research Partner Sites
 - NIJVTC@usdoj.gov
- Research Solicitation Applicants
 - NIJ solicitation support: grants@ncjrs.gov 800-851-3420
 - Grants.Gov: support@grants.gov 800-518-4726
 - JustGrants: JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov 833-872-5175

NIJ and BJA staff are not permitted to discuss applications