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The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#) (BJA) is seeking applications for Justice Reinvestment Initiative: Maximizing State Reforms. This program furthers the Department's mission by challenging units of state government and federally recognized Indian tribes to design and implement a strategy to further the goals of a state's justice reinvestment reform efforts, including the commitment to data-driven decisionmaking and investment in evidence-based practices and programs.

## **Justice Reinvestment Initiative: Maximizing State Reforms FY 2015 Competitive Grant Announcement**

### **Eligibility**

Eligible applicants are units of state government and federally recognized Indian tribal governments (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior) that can demonstrate substantial completion of the Justice Reinvestment Initiative model (see the Selection Criteria on page 24 for the key components of the model). States that underwent a formal justice reinvestment process prior to BJA's launch of the formal Justice Reinvestment Initiative are eligible to apply.

BJA will consider only one application per state or per tribal government. If more than one application is submitted for a state or tribal government, BJA will consider only the application that has received support from the Justice Reinvestment Initiative oversight council, committee, or task force charged with monitoring implementation and outcomes.

Eligible entities may submit applications on behalf of a consortium of governmental and nongovernmental partners to design and implement a strategy to further the goals of a state's justice reinvestment efforts. This partnership is not mandatory; however, if a state proposes such a partnership, one eligible entity must be the applicant and the others must be proposed as subrecipients. The applicant must be the entity with primary responsibility for administering the funding and managing the entire project. The fiscal agent will be legally responsible for complying with all applicable federal rules and regulations in receiving and expending federal funds. The fiscal agent must demonstrate such capacity by showing experience engaging core criminal justice and other partners in statewide and/or local reform efforts.

BJA may elect to make awards for applications submitted under this solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on the merit of the applications and on the availability of appropriations.

For additional eligibility information, see Section [C. Eligibility Information](#).

## Deadline

Applicants must register with [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) prior to submitting an application. All applications are due to be submitted and in receipt of a successful validation message in Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on March 10, 2015.

All applicants are encouraged 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 or 606-545-5035, or via e-mail to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) Support Hotline hours of operation are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays.

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must e-mail the contact identified below **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application. Additional information on reporting technical issues is found under "Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues" in the [How To Apply](#) section.

For assistance with any other requirement of this solicitation, contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Response Center: toll-free at 1-800-851-3420; via TTY at 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only); email [responsecenter@ncjrs.gov](mailto:responsecenter@ncjrs.gov); fax to 301-240-5830; or web chat at <https://webcontact.ncjrs.gov/ncichat/chat.jsp>. The NCJRS Response Center hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday.

Grants.gov number assigned to this announcement: BJA-2015-4058

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# Justice Reinvestment Initiative: Maximizing State Reforms CFDA #16.827

## A. Program Description

### Overview

Approximately 2.2 million people were incarcerated in federal, state, and local prisons and jails in 2013, a rate of 1 out of every 110 adults.<sup>1</sup> For the first time since 2009, the state prison population grew between 2012 and 2013; many prison populations remain near all-time high levels and face crowding or resource challenges. And state spending on corrections has remained high. Over the last 25 years, state corrections expenditures have increased exponentially—from \$12 billion in 1988 to more than \$55 billion in 2013, a significant increase even accounting for inflation.<sup>2</sup>

Justice reinvestment emerged as a way to address these issues through a targeted, data-driven policymaking process. BJA, in a public/private partnership with The Pew Charitable Trusts, launched the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) in 2010 as a multistaged process in which a jurisdiction increases the cost-effectiveness of its criminal justice system and reinvests savings into high-performing public safety strategies.

Under the JRI model, a governmental working group with bipartisan and interbranch representation analyzes the correctional population and its costs, develops cost-effective policy options, and implements reforms to manage correctional populations while enhancing public safety. JRI jurisdictions reinvest these cost savings into high-performing initiatives that make communities safer. In addition to reducing prison populations, justice reinvestment encourages states to embrace a culture of greater collaboration, data-driven decisionmaking, and increased use of evidence-based practices.

The *JRI State Assessment Report*, funded by BJA and authored by the Urban Institute, showed that the 17 assessed JRI states are making steady progress toward achieving the goals of JRI: reducing correctional spending and reinvesting in recidivism-reduction strategies.<sup>3</sup> Of the 17 states, 8 had JRI policies in effect for at least one year. All eight have experienced meaningful reductions in their prison populations, and five of them have met or exceeded their population reduction goals. Although projected savings vary across the 17 states and time periods, the report estimates that savings could amount to as much as \$4.7 billion over a 10-year period. While the full impact of justice reinvestment reforms is not yet known, the policies enacted in JRI states hold great promise to reduce prison populations and avert future growth. The Urban Institute continues to track outcomes in these 17 states and in the additional 7 states that have undertaken justice reinvestment efforts under JRI since the *JRI State Assessment Report*.

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<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Correctional Populations in the United States, 2013* (Dec. 2014), [www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus13.pdf](http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus13.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> National Association of State Budget Officers, *State Expenditure Report: Examining Fiscal 2012-2014 State Spending* (2014), [www.nasbo.org/sites/default/files/State%20Expenditure%20Report%20%28Fiscal%202012-2014%29S.pdf](http://www.nasbo.org/sites/default/files/State%20Expenditure%20Report%20%28Fiscal%202012-2014%29S.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Urban Institute, *JRI State Assessment Report* (Jan. 2014), [www.urban.org/publications/412994.html](http://www.urban.org/publications/412994.html).

The report revealed that many JRI states have issues in common and have focused on similar priorities. Each state's criminal justice system is unique, requiring detailed and specific analysis to determine factors behind prison growth and corrections spending. However, many of the states found similar factors driving populations and costs—for example, parole and probation revocation rates; sentencing policies and practices that favored incarceration of low-risk offenders over alternatives and that resulted in long lengths of stay; insufficient or inefficient community supervision, services, and support; and parole system processing delays and denials. The policy responses to these issues also overlapped, sharing themes of evidence-based practices and data-driven decisionmaking, including risk and needs assessments; accountability measures such as performance and outcome measure reporting; earned credits to encourage compliance with conditions of community supervision; intermediate and graduated sanctions; community-based treatment; sentencing changes; mandatory post-incarceration supervision requirements; problem-solving courts; and streamlined parole processes and expanded parole eligibility.

The FY 2015 Justice Reinvestment Initiative: Maximizing State Reforms challenges states to cross the finish line with JRI. Funds can be used to target local sites to achieve greater impact; promote the use of evidence-based programs and strategies by third-party treatment and programming providers; enhance paroling authorities' use of evidence-based policy, practice, and decisionmaking; create or expand the continuum of pretrial options in one or more jurisdictions; develop and pilot measures and analyses that account for population characteristics including crime type, risk level, age, and criminal history; establish or enhance performance incentive funding programs to encourage successful integration of evidence-based practices in community supervision; pilot or scale up swift and certain or intermediate and graduated sanctions; or other uses that further the state's justice reinvestment goals (see Allowable Uses for Award Funds on pages 6-8).

BJA expects that a committee, task force, or working group tasked with oversight of the state's justice reinvestment efforts will designate an agency to act as the legal applicant for this grant program. The state group should engage in a planning process to determine the most appropriate focus for this project and the most suitable applicant and partners. BJA expects that applicants will document support by the state's JRI oversight group through a letter attached to the application (see Additional Attachments on page 19).

Funding for this initiative is anticipated through the FY 2015 appropriation.

## **Program-Specific Information**

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

The goal of this program is to cement or amplify the goals of states' justice reinvestment reform efforts, deepening their investment in and commitment to use of data-driven decisionmaking and evidence-based practices and programs. The objectives of the program are the following:

- Increase corrections costs saved or avoided by reducing unnecessary confinement.
- Increase reinvestment in evidence-based practices that reduce recidivism.
- Support justice reinvestment reform efforts by promoting and increasing collaboration and data sharing among agencies and officials who work in criminal justice, including state and local policymakers, law enforcement, prosecution, defense, pretrial, courts, probation, treatment, corrections, reentry, and parole.

- Enhance the translation of evidence into practice by supporting the use of data analysis results to inform policy decisions.

### **Allowable Uses for Award Funds**

Allowable uses for award funds can include one or more of the following activities to increase or cement the gains achieved by state JRI sites:

- **Target local sites.** Applicant states may identify one or more jurisdictions that are top feeders into the state prison system to target and amplify the impact of the state-level JRI policies enacted in legislation. Proposals that target jurisdictions within the state should document the proportion of state prison admissions that originate from those jurisdictions and design a program to reduce the number of admissions. Applicants may use funds to work collaboratively with local or tribal government leadership and criminal justice stakeholders to infuse evidence-based policy and practice into arrests, prosecutorial charging decisions, pretrial detention, sentencing and diversion, revocations from probation or parole, or other drivers of the corrections population.
- **Promote the use of evidence-based programs and strategies by third-party service providers that provide substance abuse, mental health, and behavioral health treatment; diversion programming; aftercare; and reentry services.** For many individuals, community-based treatment is more effective and less costly than incarceration. As agencies seek strategically and systematically to increase community-based services for individuals for whom such placement is safe and appropriate, it is vital to ensure that these services align with the principles of effective intervention, implement evidence-based principles with fidelity, meet the needs of the target populations, and achieve performance and outcome expectations. Accordingly, applicants may propose a project that enables them to hold community-based services accountable for providing high-quality, effective services. Applicants can use funds to assess and/or enhance the extent to which service providers are using validated risk and needs assessment tools, ensuring appropriate treatment or programming dosage and responsivity, and implementing evidence-based programs and strategies with fidelity. Funds may be used to provide training in evidence-based practices to contracted service providers. Funds also may be used to plan for and implement a performance-based contracting system. Applicants are encouraged to leverage opportunities through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to expand health insurance coverage and expand access and utilization of primary and behavioral healthcare treatment.
- **Enhance paroling authorities' evidence-based policy, practice, and decisionmaking.** In several JRI states, data analysis revealed that parole system processing delays and denials were a significant contributor to the growth of the state prison population. Applicants can use grant funding to enhance parole decisionmaking in a comprehensive fashion, including the use of empirically based tools to assess individuals' risk and criminogenic needs, decisionmaking guidelines that provide structure and consistency to parole decisionmaking, training on evidence-based practices including engagement skills of parole board members, and collaborative partnerships with corrections and community supervision agencies and others to facilitate a safe transition to the community.
- **Create or expand the continuum of pretrial options in one or more jurisdictions including tribal jurisdictions, including supervision capacity.** Several JRI states targeted changes to pretrial release and supervision decisions and processes to address this driver of the corrections population. Applicants may use grant funds to pilot, or expand

capacity to provide, the least restrictive release conditions necessary to promote public safety and ensure defendants' return to court. Applicants could propose to build a continuum of options to address the range of risk and needs presented by individuals at this stage in the criminal justice process, including release on recognizance; release with telephone or SMS messages to remind defendants of court dates; release with conditions such as remaining drug- or alcohol-free, maintaining no contact with a person or place, or regular reporting by phone, kiosk, or in person; release with supervision or diversion (e.g., case management, home visits, and/or treatment); and pretrial detention. Applicants are encouraged to leverage opportunities through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to expand health insurance coverage and expand access and utilization of primary and behavioral healthcare treatment.

- **Develop and deploy analyses that provide useful and accurate population and recidivism information and that account for population characteristics including crime type, risk level, and criminal history.** Applicants should propose to create a model for comparing expected recidivism with actual recidivism that controls for salient characteristics of the population, such as crime type, risk, age, and criminal history. Using that model, applicants should propose to evaluate the effectiveness of at least one intervention or policy, for example, a prison-based cognitive behavioral therapy or substance abuse program, effectiveness of specialized caseloads, earned compliance credits, a vocational training program, or mandatory post-incarceration supervision. Such an evaluation would compare expected recidivism with actual recidivism, controlling for population characteristics, such as crime type and risk. Many JRI states share the goal of reserving prison space for those who have committed serious or violent crimes and those who pose a high public safety risk. Therefore, applicants may also use funding to develop and pilot a metric to indicate the percentage of the prison population comprising these individuals. A project of this kind should go beyond statutory definitions of “serious” or “violent” crimes to provide a more accurate picture of the prison population. In addition, as JRI states reduce the number of low-risk individuals confined in prison, recidivism rates may increase as a natural consequence of holding a higher proportion of high-risk individuals. Applicants may use funding to develop separate recidivism scores for different risk levels and to analyze survival rates at various time intervals (i.e., survival or event history analysis to determine “time to failure”). Proposals in this category should include a plan to document the methodology, process, and lessons learned so that other jurisdictions can replicate the applicant’s results.
- **Establish or enhance performance incentive funding (PIF) programs to encourage successful integration of evidence-based practices in community supervision.** PIF programs support community supervision agencies' use of evidence-based practices to reduce recidivism by rewarding such agencies when their use of evidence-based practices results in savings to the state in terms of reduced commitments to the state prison system due to revocations of supervision. Applicants may use funding to seed or scale up PIF programs. For more information on performance incentive funding programs, applicants may refer to [Performance Incentive Funding: Aligning Fiscal and Operational Responsibility to Produce More Safety at Less Cost](#).
- **Pilot or scale up intermediate and graduated responses, including swift and certain sanctions.** Legislation in several JRI states established pilot programs for swift and certain sanctions modeled on programs like Hawai'i Opportunity Probation with Enforcement (HOPE), Texas Supervision with Intensive Enforcement (SWIFT), Sobriety 24/7 in South Dakota, and Alaska's Probation Accountability and Certain Enforcement (PACE), or more

broadly required intermediate and graduated responses to encourage supervision compliance. Applicants may propose funding to pilot intermediate and graduated response programs, which may incorporate positive reinforcements and swift and certain sanctions, in one or more jurisdictions. Applicants may also propose to scale up existing pilots to take these initiatives to a greater number of jurisdictions or statewide. These proposals should include a plan to collect relevant data and track outcomes. To learn more about swift and certain sanctions, applicants can refer to the following publications:

- [Managing Drug-Involved Probationers with Swift and Certain Sanctions: Evaluating Hawaii's HOPE](#)
- [Effective Responses to Offender Behavior: Lessons Learned for Probation and Parole Supervision](#)
- **Develop and implement another evidence-based strategy to further the state's justice reinvestment goals.** Applicants may also develop another strategy, not listed here, that furthers the state's justice reinvestment goals and is in keeping with the goals of JRI. These proposals should clearly articulate objectives and link them to one or more policy option(s) developed as part of the state's justice reinvestment efforts. Such proposals should also clearly cite and describe the research supporting the proposed evidence-based strategy.

**To support the program, successful grantees will receive technical assistance that is tailored to the strategies proposed.**

### **Evidence-Based Programs or Practices**

OJP strongly emphasizes the use of data and evidence in policy making and program development in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services. OJP is committed to:

- improving the quantity and quality of evidence OJP generates;
- integrating evidence into program, practice, and policy decisions within OJP and the field; and
- improving the translation of evidence into practice.

OJP considers programs and practices to be evidence-based when their effectiveness has been demonstrated by causal evidence, generally obtained through one or more outcome evaluations. Causal evidence documents a relationship between an activity or intervention (including technology) and its intended outcome, including measuring the direction and size of a change, and the extent to which a change may be attributed to the activity or intervention. Causal evidence depends on the use of scientific methods to rule out, to the extent possible, alternative explanations for the documented change. The strength of causal evidence, based on the factors described above, will influence the degree to which OJP considers a program or practice to be evidence-based. The [OJP CrimeSolutions.gov](http://OJP.CrimeSolutions.gov) web site is one resource that applicants may use to find information about evidence-based programs in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services.

## **B. Federal Award Information**

### **Amount and Length of Award**

BJA estimates that it will make up to four awards of up to \$1,750,000 for an estimated total of \$7,000,000 for a 36-month project period, beginning on or about October 1, 2015.

BJA may, in certain cases, provide supplemental funding in future years to awards under this solicitation. Important considerations in decisions regarding supplemental funding include, among other factors, the availability of funding, strategic priorities, assessment of the quality of the management of the award (for example, timeliness and quality of progress reports), and assessment of the progress of the work funded under the award.

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<sup>4</sup>**

BJA expects that it will make any award from this solicitation in the form of a grant.

#### **Financial Management and System of Internal Controls**

If selected for funding, the award recipient must:

(a) Establish and maintain effective internal control over the federal award that provides reasonable assurance that the non-federal entity 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 non-federal entity's compliance with statute, 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 non-federal entity considers sensitive consistent with applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality.

In order to better understand administrative requirements and cost principles, award applicants are encouraged to enroll, at no charge, in the Department of Justice Grants Financial Management Online Training available [here](#).

#### **Budget Information**

##### **Unallowable and Unreasonable Uses for Award Funds**

In addition to the unallowable costs identified in the [Financial Guide](#), award funds may not be used for the following:

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<sup>4</sup> See *generally* 31 U.S.C. §§ 6301-6305 (defines and describes various forms of federal assistance relationships, including grants and cooperative agreements (a type of grant)).

- Prizes/rewards/entertainment/trinkets (or any type of monetary incentive)
- Gift cards
- Stipends
- Vehicles
- Food and beverage
- Costs that do not support approved project activities

For questions pertaining to budget and examples of allowable and unallowable costs, see the Financial Guide at [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/financialguide/index.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/financialguide/index.htm).

### **Cost Sharing or Match Requirement**

If a state has measured and reinvested savings (either projected or actual costs saved or avoided) into evidence-based strategies to reduce recidivism and make communities safer (see Selection Criteria on page 24), then a match is not required. If such a state proposes a voluntary match amount, however, and OJP approves the budget, the total match amount incorporated into the approved budget becomes mandatory and subject to audit.

### **Match Requirement (based on federal award amount)**

If a state has not measured and reinvested savings (see Selection Criteria on page 24), a match is required, and the following requirements apply:

- The amount of the match must equal the amount of federal funds being sought.
- Match funds are subject to the same regulations and restrictions as the federal funds for this program (see Federal Award Information on page 8).
- Applicants must identify the source of the non-federal funds and how they will use the funds. If a successful applicant's proposed match exceeds the required match amount, and OJP approves the budget, the total match amount incorporated into the approved budget becomes mandatory and subject to audit.
- Applicants may satisfy this match requirement with cash, in-kind services, or a combination of the two.
- Match funds must be used for one or more of the state's reinvestment strategies identified in the justice reinvestment process. For example, match funding can be used to expand or improve community-based treatment only if the JRI legislation or task force identified community-based treatment as a reinvestment priority. As another example, match funding could be used for skills-based trainings for probation officers if the state's reinvestment strategies included more effective community supervision.
- Applicants must identify the target(s) of the reinvestment match with specificity, including, if applicable, names of agencies, service providers, or staff positions to be funded; a description of the kind of service to be provided or functions to be performed; what period of time will be covered; and amounts of funding. Applicants must document these commitments by including relevant attachments to the application (see Additional Attachments on page 19).

**Example:** For a federal award amount of \$1,750,000, the required reinvestment match is \$1,750,000.

For additional cost sharing and match information, see Section [C. Eligibility Information](#).

### **Pre-Agreement Cost Approvals**

OJP does not typically approve pre-agreement costs; an applicant must request and obtain the prior written approval of OJP for all such costs. If approved, pre-agreement costs could be paid from grant funds consistent with a grantee's approved budget, and under applicable cost standards. However, all such costs prior to award and prior to approval of the costs are incurred at the sole risk of an applicant. Generally, no applicant should incur project costs *before* submitting an application requesting federal funding for those costs. Should there be extenuating circumstances that appear to be appropriate for OJP's consideration as pre-agreement costs, the applicant should contact the point of contact listed on the title page of this announcement for details on the requirements for submitting a written request for approval. See the section on Costs Requiring Prior Approval in the [Financial Guide](#), 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, recipients may not use federal funds to pay total cash compensation (salary plus cash bonuses) to any employee of the award 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.<sup>5</sup> The 2015 salary table for SES employees is available at [www.opm.gov/salary-tables](http://www.opm.gov/salary-tables). 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. (Any such additional compensation will not be considered matching funds where match requirements apply.)

The Assistant Attorney General for OJP may exercise discretion to waive, on an individual basis, the limitation on compensation rates allowable under an award. An applicant requesting a waiver should include a detailed justification in the budget narrative of the application. Unless the applicant submits a waiver request and justification with the application, the applicant should anticipate that OJP will request the applicant to adjust and resubmit the budget.

The justification should include the particular qualifications and expertise of the individual, the uniqueness of the service the individual will provide, the individual's specific knowledge of the program or project being undertaken with award funds, and a statement explaining that the individual's salary is commensurate with the regular and customary rate for an individual with his/her qualifications and expertise, and for the work to be done.

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

OJP strongly encourages applicants that propose to use award funds for any conference-, meeting-, or training-related activity to review carefully – before submitting an application – the OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at [www.ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.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 such costs for cooperative

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<sup>5</sup> This limitation on use of award funds does not apply to the non-profit organizations specifically named at Appendix VIII to 2 C.F.R. part 200.

agreement recipients and of some such costs for grant recipients; and (3) set cost limits, including 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 "Solicitation Requirements" in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

## **C. Eligibility Information**

For additional eligibility information, see Title page.

### **Cost Sharing or Match Requirement**

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

### **Limit on Number of Application Submissions**

If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, BJA will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted. For more information on system-validated versions, see [How To Apply](#).

## **D. Application and Submission Information**

### **What an Application Should Include**

Applicants should anticipate that if they fail to submit an application that contains all of the specified elements, it may negatively affect the review of their application; and, should a decision be made to make an award, it may result in the inclusion of special conditions that preclude the recipient from accessing or using award funds pending satisfaction of the conditions.

Moreover, applicants should anticipate that applications that are determined to be nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation, or that do not include the application elements that BJA has designated to be critical, will neither proceed to peer review nor receive further consideration. Under this solicitation, BJA has designated the following application elements as critical: Program Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet, and Budget Narrative. Applicants may combine the Budget Narrative and the Budget Detail Worksheet in one document. However, if an applicant submits only one budget document, it must contain **both** narrative and detail information. Review the "Note on File Names and File Types" under [How To Apply](#) to be sure applications are submitted in permitted formats.

*OJP strongly recommends that applicants use appropriately descriptive file names (e.g., "Program Narrative," "Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative," "Timelines,"*

*“Memoranda of Understanding,” “Resumes”*) for all attachments. Also, OJP recommends that applicants include resumes in a single file.

## 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 OJP’s 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).

**Intergovernmental Review:** This funding opportunity is subject to [Executive Order 12372](#). Applicants may find the names and addresses of their state’s Single Point of Contact (SPOC) at the following web site: [www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_spoc/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/). Applicants whose state appears on the SPOC list must contact their state’s SPOC to find out about, and comply with, the state’s process under Executive Order 12372. In completing the SF-424, applicants whose state appears on the SPOC list are to make the appropriate selection in response to question 19 once the applicant has complied with their state’s E.O. 12372 process. (Applicants whose state does not appear on the SPOC list are to make the appropriate selection in response to question 19 to indicate that the “Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.”)

## 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 (Times New Roman) with 1-inch margins.
- **Include the following clearly labeled and delineated information:**
  - legal name of the grant recipient and the title of the project;
  - project’s goals and deliverables and how the goals relate to the state’s JRI goals;
  - project design elements including the allowable uses of funds that will be incorporated into the project; and
  - if applicable, the projected number of participants to be served through the project and target population characteristics and target geographical area, if applicable.

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

BJA requests that the abstract be submitted as a text file, such as Word .doc format.

**Permission to Share Project Abstract with the Public:** It is unlikely that BJA will be able to fund all promising applications submitted under this solicitation, but it may have the opportunity to share information with the public regarding promising but unfunded applications, for example, through a listing on a webpage available to the public. The intent of this public posting would be to allow other possible funders to become aware of such proposals.

In the project abstract template, applicants are asked to indicate whether they give OJP permission to share their project abstract (including contact information) with the public.

Granting (or failing to grant) this permission will not affect OJP's funding decisions, and, if the application is not funded, granting permission will not guarantee that abstract information will be shared, nor will it guarantee funding from any other source.

If the applicant elects to grant permission, please submit a version of the abstract (in addition to the Word version) using the detailed template available at [ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/ProjectAbstractTemplate.pdf](http://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/ProjectAbstractTemplate.pdf).

**Note:** OJP may choose not to list a project that otherwise would have been included in a listing of promising but unfunded applications, should the abstract fail to meet the format and content requirements noted above and outlined in the project abstract template.

### 3. Program Narrative

The program narrative must respond to the solicitation and the Selection Criteria (a-e) in the order given. The program narrative must be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman is preferred) with no less than 1-inch margins, and must not exceed 15 pages. Number pages "1 of 15," "2 of 15," etc.

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

The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative: See "Selection Criteria" on page 24 for more information about what each section should include.

- a. Statement of the Problem
- b. Project Design and Implementation
- c. Capabilities and Competencies
- d. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures  
To assist the Department with 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, applicants that receive funding under this solicitation must provide data that measure the results of their work done under this solicitation. OJP will require any award recipient, post award, to provide the data requested in the "Data Grantee Provides" column so that OJP can calculate values for the "Performance Measures" column. Performance measures for this solicitation are as follows:

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Data Grantee Provides
<p>Increase corrections costs saved or avoided by reducing unnecessary confinement</p>	<p>Percent increase in costs saved since the previous fiscal year</p> <p>Percent increase in costs avoided since the previous fiscal year</p> <p>Percent increase in funds reinvested since the previous fiscal year</p> <p>Percent decrease in the confined (prison) population</p> <p>Number of strategies implemented to reduce unnecessary confinement</p>	<p>During the current fiscal year:</p> <p>Corrections costs attributable to confined population prior to project implementation</p> <p>Corrections population forecast for the current fiscal year</p> <p>A. Corrections costs saved due to a decrease in the confined population</p> <p>B. Corrections costs avoided due to a confined population that is smaller than forecast by population projections</p> <p>C. Amount reinvested in strategies or programs that were identified as targets as part of the state's justice reinvestment efforts</p> <p>During the reporting period:</p> <p>A. Number of new admissions to prison</p> <p>B. Number of offenders released from prison</p> <p>C. As of the last day of the reporting period, number of individuals confined in prison</p> <p>Number of strategies implemented to reduce unnecessary confinement by type, to include but not limited to,</p> <p>a) Prosecutorial charging decisions</p> <p>b) Arrest decisions</p> <p>c) Pretrial detention</p> <p>d) Sentencing and diversion</p> <p>e) Probation or parole</p> <p>f) Risk and needs assessment</p> <p>g) Other drivers of the corrections population</p>
<p>Increase reinvestment in evidence-based practices that reduce recidivism</p>	<p>Number of new or updated policies, procedures, strategies, or interventions implemented in accordance with the governing evidence-based principles</p> <p>Number of programs assessed as successfully implementing an evidence-based model</p>	<p>Number of new or updated policies, procedures, strategies, or interventions implemented in accordance with the governing evidence-based principles</p> <p>Number of programs assessed as successfully implementing an evidence-based model</p>
<p>Support justice reinvestment reform efforts by promoting and increasing collaboration among agencies and</p>	<p>Percentage of project plan outcomes met</p>	<p>During the reporting period:</p> <p>A. Number of project tasks</p> <p>B. Number of project tasks completed</p>

officials who work in criminal justice	<p>Percentage of participating agencies/organizations with established Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with each of the identified groups</p> <p>Number of deliverables that meet expectations as determined by BJA</p>	<p>Number of participating jurisdictions with MOUs established with following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Governor's office</li> <li>b) Legislature</li> <li>c) Judicial branch</li> <li>d) Law enforcement</li> <li>e) Prosecutors</li> <li>f) Other key stakeholders</li> </ul> <p>Number of deliverables that meet expectations as determined by BJA</p>
Enhance the translation of evidence into practice by supporting the use of data analysis results to inform policy decisions	<p>Number of analytic reports produced</p> <p>Number of analytic reports submitted</p> <p>Number of meetings with stakeholder groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Number of analysis reports produced</li> <li>B. Number of analysis reports delivered to policymakers</li> <li>C. Number of different stakeholder groups consulted</li> <li>D. Number of meetings with stakeholder groups held</li> <li>E. Number of meetings at which steering committee or task force members received implementation progress updates supported by data</li> </ul>

BJA does not require applicants to submit performance measures data with their application. Performance measures are included as an alert that BJA will require successful applicants to submit specific data as part of their reporting requirements. For the application, applicants should indicate an understanding of these requirements and discuss how they will gather the required data, should they receive funding.

**Note on Project Evaluations**

Applicants that propose to use funds awarded 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.” Applicants should provide sufficient information for OJP to determine whether the particular project they propose would either intentionally or unintentionally collect and/or use information in such a way that it meets the DOJ regulatory definition of research.

Research, for the purposes of human subjects protections 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, see the decision tree to assist applicants on the “Research and the Protection of Human Subjects” section of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](http://ojp.gov/funding/Explore/SolicitationRequirements/EvidenceResearchEvaluationRequirements.htm) web page ([ojp.gov/funding/Explore/SolicitationRequirements/EvidenceResearchEvaluationRequirements.htm](http://ojp.gov/funding/Explore/SolicitationRequirements/EvidenceResearchEvaluationRequirements.htm)). Applicants whose proposals may

involve a research or statistical component also should review the “Data Privacy and Confidentiality Requirements” section on that web page.

e. Impact/Outcomes, Evaluation, and Sustainment

#### 4. Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative

##### a. Budget Detail Worksheet

A sample Budget Detail Worksheet can be found at [www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/BudgetDetailWorksheet.pdf](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/BudgetDetailWorksheet.pdf). Applicants that submit their budget in a different format should include the budget categories listed in the sample budget worksheet (i.e., A. Personnel, B. Fringe Benefits, C. Travel, D. Equipment, E. Supplies, F. Construction, G. Consultants/Contracts, H. Other Costs, I. Indirect Costs)

Budgets clearly itemize the project’s spending plan for the project period. Computations should be mathematically sound and detailed. Budgets should also reframe from including unallowable and costs that are not necessary for JRI project activities (e.g., unreasonable costs).

The budget categories and amounts included in the budget detail worksheet should mirror the amounts in the budget narrative.

For questions pertaining to budget and examples of allowable and unallowable costs, see the Financial Guide at [www.ojp.gov/financialguide/index.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/financialguide/index.htm).

See “Selection Criteria” on page 24 for more detail on what a budget for the Justice Reinvestment Initiative: Maximizing State Reforms Program should include.

##### 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).

Applicants should demonstrate in their budget narratives how they will maximize cost effectiveness of grant 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 narrative should be mathematically sound and correspond with the information and figures provided in the Budget Detail Worksheet, including the match requirement, if applicable (see Match Requirement on page 10). The narrative should explain how the applicant estimated and calculated all costs, and how they are relevant 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 be broken down by year.

**c. Non-Competitive Procurement Contracts In Excess of Simplified Acquisition Threshold**

If an applicant proposes to make one or more non-competitive procurements of products or services, where the non-competitive procurement will exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (also known as the small purchase threshold), which is currently set at \$150,000, the application should address the considerations outlined in the [Financial Guide](#).

**d. Pre-Agreement Cost Approvals**

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

**5. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)**

Indirect costs are allowed only if the applicant has a current federally approved indirect cost rate. (This requirement does not apply to units of local government.) Attach a copy of the federally approved indirect cost rate agreement to the application. Applicants that do not have an approved rate may request one through their cognizant federal agency, which will review all documentation and approve a rate for the applicant organization, or, if the applicant's accounting system permits, costs may be allocated in the direct cost categories. For the definition of Cognizant Federal Agency, see the "Glossary of Terms" in the [Financial Guide](#). For assistance with identifying your cognizant agency, please contact the Customer Service Center at 1-800-458-0786 or at [ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov](mailto:ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov). If DOJ is the cognizant federal agency, applicants may obtain information needed to submit an indirect cost rate proposal at [www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/IndirectCosts.pdf](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/IndirectCosts.pdf).

**6. Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)**

Tribes, tribal organizations, or third parties proposing to provide direct services or assistance to residents on tribal lands should include in their applications a resolution, a letter, affidavit, or other documentation, as appropriate, that certifies that the applicant has the legal authority from the tribe(s) to implement the proposed project on tribal lands. In those instances when an organization or consortium of tribes applies for a grant 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 grant. 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. Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status**

Applicants are to disclose whether they are currently designated high risk by another federal grant making agency. This includes any status requiring additional oversight by the federal agency due to past programmatic or financial concerns. If an applicant is designated high risk by another federal grant making agency, you must email the following information to [OJPComplianceReporting@usdoj.gov](mailto:OJPComplianceReporting@usdoj.gov) at the time of application submission:

- The federal agency that currently designated the applicant as high risk;
- Date the applicant was designated high risk;
- The high risk point of contact name, phone number, and email address, from that federal agency; and
- Reasons for the high risk status.

OJP seeks this information to ensure appropriate federal oversight of any grant award. Unlike the Excluded Parties List, this high risk information does not disqualify any organization from receiving an OJP award. However, additional grant oversight may be included, if necessary, in award documentation.

## 8. Additional Attachments

- a. **Letter(s) from JRI task force or oversight group (if applicable)**, demonstrating how the strategy expressed in the proposal complements the existing reinvestment strategies and documenting the group's support. If such a group is active, BJA considers this letter to be an important indication that the state has engaged in the strategic planning necessary to this program.
- b. **Letters of Support** from all key partners, detailing the commitment to work with the applicant to promote the mission of the project.
- c. **State-Specific Metrics** adopted by the state oversight council and/or individual state agencies to track implementation and intermediate outcomes of JRI policies. Attach a list or spreadsheet of the measures themselves as well as all data collected and reported to date pursuant to these measures (see Selection Criteria on page 24). Note that these are distinct from the solicitation's performance measures outlined in the table on page 14 of this solicitation (although some may overlap) and should be specific to the applicant state's system and policies.
- d. **Project Timeline** with each project goal, related objective, activity, expected completion date, and responsible person or organization.
- e. **Position Descriptions** for key positions and **Resumes** for personnel in those positions.
- f. **Documentation of Reinvestment Match** (if applicable—see Match Requirement on page 10).
- g. **Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications**  
Applicants are to disclose whether they have pending applications for federally funded grants or subgrants (including cooperative agreements) that include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation. The disclosure should include both direct applications for federal funding (e.g., applications to federal agencies) and indirect applications for such funding (e.g., applications to state agencies that will subaward federal funds).

OJP seeks this information to help avoid any 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.

Applicants that have pending applications as described above are 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 funding agency.

Federal or State Funding Agency	Solicitation Name/Project Name	Name/Phone/E-mail for Point of Contact at Funding Agency
DOJ/COPS	COPS Hiring Program	Jane Doe, 202/000-0000; <a href="mailto:jane.doe@usdoj.gov">jane.doe@usdoj.gov</a>
HHS/ Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration	Drug Free Communities Mentoring Program/ North County Youth Mentoring Program	John Doe, 202/000-0000; <a href="mailto:john.doe@hhs.gov">john.doe@hhs.gov</a>

Applicants should include the table as a separate attachment, with the file name “Disclosure of Pending Applications,” to their application. Applicants that do not have pending applications as described above are to include a statement to this effect in the separate attachment page (e.g., “[Applicant Name on SF-424] does not have pending applications submitted within the last 12 months for federally funded grants or subgrants (including cooperative agreements) that include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation.”), with the file name “Disclosure of Pending Applications,” to their application.

**h. Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity**

If a proposal involves research and/or evaluation, regardless of the proposal’s other merits, in order to receive funds, the applicant must demonstrate research/evaluation independence, including appropriate safeguards to ensure research/evaluation objectivity and integrity, both in this proposal and as it may relate to the applicant’s other current or prior related projects. This documentation may be included as an attachment to the application which addresses BOTH i. and ii. below.

- i. For purposes of this solicitation, applicants must document research and evaluation independence and integrity by including, at a minimum, one of the following two items:
  - a. A specific assurance that the applicant has reviewed its proposal to identify any research integrity issues (including all principal investigators and sub-recipients) and it has concluded that the design, conduct, or reporting of research and evaluation funded by BJA grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts will not be biased by any personal or financial conflict of interest on the part of part of its staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients responsible for the research and evaluation or on the part of the applicant organization;

OR

- b. A specific listing of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that the applicant has identified in relation to this proposal. These conflicts could be either personal (related to specific staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients) or organizational (related to the applicant or any subgrantee organization). Examples of potential investigator (or other personal) conflict situations may include, but are not limited to, 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 could not be given a grant 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), as the organization in such an instance would 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 applicants must address the issue of 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 potential personal or organizational conflicts of interest exist, then the applicant should provide a brief narrative explanation of how and why it reached that conclusion. Applicants **MUST** also include an explanation of the specific processes and procedures that the applicant will put in place to identify and eliminate (or, at the very least, mitigate) potential personal or financial conflicts of interest on the part of its staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients for this particular project, should that be necessary during the grant period. Documentation that may be helpful in this regard could include organizational codes of ethics/conduct or policies regarding organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest.

OR

- b. If the applicant has identified specific personal or organizational conflicts of interest in its proposal during this review, the applicant must propose a specific and robust mitigation plan to address conflicts noted above. At a minimum, the plan must include specific processes and procedures that the applicant will put in place to eliminate (or, at the very least, mitigate) potential personal or financial conflicts of interest on the part of its staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients for this particular project, should that be necessary during the grant period. Documentation that may be helpful in this regard could include organizational codes of ethics/conduct or policies regarding organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest. There is no guarantee that the plan, if any, will be accepted as proposed.

Considerations in assessing research and evaluation independence and integrity will include, but are not be limited to, the adequacy of the applicant's efforts to identify factors that could affect the objectivity or integrity of the proposed staff and/or the organization 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.

## **9. Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire**

In accordance with [2 CFR 200.205](#), federal agencies must have in place a framework for evaluating the risks posed by applicants before they receive a Federal award. To facilitate

part of this risk evaluation, **all** applicants (other than an individual) are to download, complete, and submit this [form](#).

**10. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**

All applicants must complete this information. Applicants that expend any funds for lobbying activities are to provide the detailed information requested on the form Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL). Applicants that do not expend any funds for lobbying activities are to enter “N/A” in the text boxes for item 10 (“a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant” and “b. Individuals Performing Services”).

**How To Apply**

Applicants must register in, and submit applications through Grants.gov, a “one-stop storefront” to find federal funding opportunities and apply for funding. Find complete instructions on how to register and submit an application at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Applicants that experience technical difficulties during this process should call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at **800-518-4726** or **606-545-5035**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except 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 and a user password. OJP encourages applicants to **register several weeks before** the application submission deadline. In addition, OJP urges applicants to submit applications 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.

BJA strongly encourages all prospective applicants to sign up for Grants.gov email notifications regarding this solicitation. If this solicitation is cancelled or modified, individuals who sign up with Grants.gov for updates will be automatically notified.

**Note on File Names and File Types:** Grants.gov only permits the use of certain specific characters in names of attachment files. Valid file names may include only the characters shown in the table below. Grants.gov is designed to reject any application that includes an attachment(s) with a file name that contains any characters not shown in the table below.

Characters	Special Characters		
Upper case (A – Z)	Parenthesis ( )	Curly braces { }	Square brackets [ ]
Lower case (a – z)	Ampersand (&)	Tilde (~)	Exclamation point (!)
Underscore ( _ )	Comma ( , )	Semicolon ( ; )	Apostrophe ( ‘ )
Hyphen ( - )	At sign ( @ )	Number sign ( # )	Dollar sign ( \$ )
Space	Percent sign ( % )	Plus sign ( + )	Equal sign ( = )
Period ( . )	<b>When using the ampersand (&amp;) in XML, applicants must use the “&amp;amp;” format.</b>		

Grants.gov is designed to forward successfully submitted applications to OJP’s Grants Management System (GMS).

**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:

OJP may not make a federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the federal awarding agency is ready to make a federal award, the federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

- 1. Acquire a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.** In general, the Office of Management and Budget requires that all applicants (other than individuals) for federal funds include a DUNS number in their applications for a new award or a supplement to an existing award. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and differentiating entities receiving federal funds. The identifier is used for tracking purposes and to validate address and point of contact information for federal assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. The DUNS number will be used throughout the grant life cycle. 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 [www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com). A DUNS number is usually received within 1-2 business days.
- 2. Acquire registration with the System for Award Management (SAM).** SAM is the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. OJP requires all applicants (other than individuals) for federal financial assistance to maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Applicants must be registered in SAM to successfully register in Grants.gov. Applicants must **update or renew their SAM registration annually** to maintain an active status.

Applications cannot be successfully submitted in Grants.gov until Grants.gov receives the SAM registration information. **The information transfer from SAM to Grants.gov can take up to 48 hours.** OJP recommends that the applicant register or renew registration with SAM as early as possible.

Information about SAM registration procedures can be accessed at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

- 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. The applicant organization's DUNS number must be used to complete this step. For more information about the registration process, go to [www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp).
- 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. 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 number for this solicitation is 16.827, titled "Justice Reinvestment Initiative," and the funding opportunity number is BJA-2015-4058.
- 6. Submit a valid application consistent with this solicitation by following the directions in Grants.gov.** 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 and the second will state whether the application has been successfully

validated, or 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 well ahead of the deadline provides time to correct the problem(s) that caused the rejection. **Important:** OJP urges applicants to submit applications **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.

Click [here](#) for further details on DUNS, SAM, and Grants.gov registration steps and timeframes.

### **Note: Duplicate Applications**

If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, BJA will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted. See Note on File Names and File Types under [How To Apply](#).

### **Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues**

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must contact the Grants.gov [Customer Support Hotline](#) or the [SAM Help Desk](#) to report the technical issue and receive a tracking number. Then applicant must e-mail the BJA contact identified in the Contact Information section on page 2 **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application. The e-mail must describe the technical difficulties, and 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: BJA does not automatically approve requests.** After the program office reviews the submission, and contacts the Grants.gov or SAM Help Desks to validate 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 applicant failed to follow all required procedures, which resulted in an untimely application submission, OJP will deny the applicant's request to submit their application.

The following conditions are generally insufficient to justify late submissions:

- failure to register in SAM or Grants.gov in sufficient time
- failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its Web site
- failure to follow each instruction in the OJP solicitation
- technical issues with the applicant's computer or information technology environment, including firewalls.

**Notifications regarding known technical problems with Grants.gov, if any, are posted at the top of the OJP funding web page at [www.ojp.gov/funding/Explore/CurrentFundingOpportunities.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Explore/CurrentFundingOpportunities.htm).**

## **E. Application Review Information**

### **Selection Criteria**

The following six selection criteria will be used to evaluate each application, with the different weight given to each based on the percentage value listed below after each individual criteria.

For example, the first criterion, “Statement of the Problem,” is worth 20 percent of the entire application in the review process.

### **1. Statement of the Problem (20 percent)**

- Describe state’s fidelity to the state-level JRI model. The application must describe the state’s actions related to the following components with specificity:
  - Convening a bi-partisan, interbranch task force or committee;
  - Analyzing criminal justice system data to determine drivers of the corrections population and costs;
  - Adopting policy options through legislation to address the drivers;
  - Implementing legislation and related evidence-based strategies;
  - Adopting robust performance measures (including measuring cost savings/avoidance); and
  - Identifying reinvestment priorities.
- Describe outcomes to date, including corrections population changes, costs saved or avoided, and any other relevant outcomes.
- Describe amounts and targets of reinvestment to date. If the state has made no reinvestment to date, describe the matching funds, as detailed on page 10.
- Describe challenges faced in achieving intended outcomes that this project is designed to address.
- Explain the inability to fund the project adequately without federal assistance.

### **2. Project Design and Implementation (35 percent)**

- Describe specifically which areas the proposed project will address (refer to the “Allowable Uses of Funds” section on pages 6-8).
- Clearly articulate the goals established for this project and connect them to the overarching goals of the solicitation set forth on page 5-6.
- Explain how this project complements, rather than supplants, the state’s reinvestment strategies.
- Use data to support the project design.
- If applicable, indicate the number of people who would receive services if this proposal is funded.

### **3. Capabilities and Competencies (25 percent)**

- Describe the management structure and staffing of the project, identifying the agency responsible for the project and the grant coordinator.
- Demonstrate the capability of the applicant to ensure proper fiscal and programmatic oversight of the grant, make and administer subgrants as appropriate, and manage the collaborative partnerships involved, if applicable.
- List the partners (governmental and non-governmental, if applicable) and describe their

competencies, the relationship of those agencies to the applicant, and the history of collaboration among the partners.

#### **4. Plan for Collecting Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (5 percent)**

- Describe the process for assessing the project's effectiveness through the collection and reporting of the required performance metrics data (see Performance Measures on page 14).

#### **5. Impact/Outcomes, Evaluation, and Sustainment (10 percent)**

- Identify goals and objectives for project development, implementation, and outcomes.
- Describe how performance will be documented, monitored, and evaluated, and identify the impact of the strategy once implemented.
- Outline what data and information will be collected and describe how evaluation and collaborative partnerships will be leveraged to build long-term support and resources for the project.
- Discuss how this effort will be integrated into the state or tribal justice system plans or commitments, how the project will be financially sustained after federal funding ends, and the expected long-term results for the program.

#### **6. Budget (5 percent)**

- Submit a budget that is complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities). Budget narratives should generally demonstrate 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.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Review Process**

OJP is committed to ensuring a fair and open process for awarding grants. BJA 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 applicants have met basic minimum requirements, OJP screens applications for compliance with specified program requirements to help determine which applications should proceed to further consideration for award. Although program requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all solicitations for funding under OJP grant programs:

- Applications must be submitted by an eligible type of applicant
- Applications must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable)
- Applications must be responsive to the scope of the solicitation
- Applications must include all items designated as "critical elements"

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<sup>6</sup> 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.

- Applicants will be checked against the General Services Administration’s Excluded Parties List

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

BJA may use internal peer reviewers, external peer reviewers, or a combination, to assess applications meeting basic minimum requirements on technical merit using the solicitation’s selection criteria. An external peer reviewer is an expert in the subject matter of a given solicitation who is NOT a current DOJ employee. An internal reviewer is a current DOJ employee who is well-versed or has expertise in the subject matter of this solicitation. A peer review panel will evaluate, score, and rate applications that meet basic minimum requirements. Peer reviewers’ ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only, although their views are considered carefully. In addition to peer review ratings, considerations for award recommendations and decisions may include, but are not limited to, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance under prior BJA and OJP awards, and available funding.

OJP reviews applications for potential discretionary awards to evaluate the risks posed by applicants before they receive an award. This review may include but is not limited to the following:

1. Financial stability and fiscal integrity
2. Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in the Financial Guide
3. History of performance
4. Reports and findings from audits
5. The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-federal entities
6. Proposed costs to determine if the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative accurately explain project costs, and whether those costs are reasonable, necessary, and allowable under applicable federal cost principles and agency regulations

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 consider factors including, but not limited to, peer review ratings, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding when making awards.

## **F. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **Federal Award Notices**

OJP award notification will be sent from GMS. Recipients will be required to log in; accept any outstanding assurances and certifications on the award; designate a financial point of contact; and review, sign, and accept the award. The award acceptance process involves physical signature of the award document by the authorized representative and the scanning of the fully-executed award document to OJP.

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

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the agency-approved project proposal and budget, the recipient must comply with award terms and conditions, and other legal requirements, including but not limited to OMB, DOJ or other federal regulations which will be included in the award, incorporated into the award by reference, or are otherwise applicable to the award. OJP strongly encourages prospective applicants to review the information pertaining to these requirements **prior** to submitting an application. To assist applicants and recipients in accessing and reviewing this information, OJP has placed pertinent information on its [Solicitation Requirements](#) page of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

Note in particular the following two forms, which applicants must accept in GMS prior to the receipt of any award funds, as each details legal requirements with which applicants must provide specific assurances and certifications of compliance. Applicants may view these forms in the Apply section of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#) and are strongly encouraged to review and consider them carefully prior to making an application for OJP grant funds.

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

Upon grant approval, OJP electronically transmits (via GMS) the award document to the prospective award recipient. In addition to other award information, the award document contains award terms and conditions that specify national policy requirements<sup>7</sup> with which recipients of federal funding must comply; uniform administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements; and program-specific terms and conditions required based on applicable program (statutory) authority or requirements set forth in OJP solicitations and program announcements, and other requirements which may be attached to appropriated funding. For example, certain efforts may call for special requirements, terms, or conditions relating to intellectual property, data/information-sharing or -access, or information security; or audit requirements, expenditures and milestones, or publications and/or press releases. OJP also may place additional terms and conditions on an award based on its risk assessment of the applicant, or for other reasons it determines necessary to fulfill the goals and objectives of the program.

Prospective applicants may access and review the text of mandatory conditions OJP includes in all OJP awards, as well as the text of certain other conditions, such as administrative conditions, via [Mandatory Award Terms and Conditions](#) page of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

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

Recipients must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, final financial and progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent.

Special Reporting requirements may be required by OJP depending on the statutory, legislative or administrative obligations of the recipient or the program.

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<sup>7</sup> See generally 2 C.F.R. 200.300 (provides a general description of national policy requirements typically applicable to recipients of Federal awards, including the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA)).

## G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

For additional Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s), see the Title page.

For additional contact information for Grants.gov, see the Title page.

## H. Other Information

### Provide Feedback to OJP

To assist OJP in improving its application and award processes, we encourage applicants to provide feedback on this solicitation, the application submission process, and/or the application review/peer review process. Provide feedback to [OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov](mailto:OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov).

**IMPORTANT:** This e-mail is for feedback and suggestions only. Replies are **not** sent from this mailbox. If you have specific questions on any program or technical aspect of the solicitation, **you must** directly contact the appropriate number or e-mail listed on the front of this solicitation document. These contacts are provided to help ensure that you can directly reach an individual who can address your specific questions in a timely manner.

If you are interested in being a reviewer for other OJP grant applications, please e-mail your resume to [ojppeerreview@lmbps.com](mailto:ojppeerreview@lmbps.com). The OJP Solicitation Feedback email account will not forward your resume. **Note:** Neither you nor anyone else from your organization can be a peer reviewer in a competition in which you or your organization have submitted an application.

**Application Checklist**  
**FY 2015 Justice Reinvestment Initiative: Maximizing State Reforms**

This application checklist has been created to assist in developing an application.

**What an Applicant Should Do:**

*Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire a DUNS Number (see page 23)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see page 23)

*To Register with Grants.gov:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see page 23)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see page 23)

*To Find Funding Opportunity:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov (see page 23)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Download Funding Opportunity and Application Package
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sign up for Grants.gov email notifications (optional) (see page 22)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)

*After application submission, receive Grants.gov email notifications that:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ (1) application has been received, and
- \_\_\_\_\_ (2) application has either been successfully validated or rejected with errors (see page 23)

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

- \_\_\_\_\_ contact the NCJRS Response Center regarding experiencing technical difficulties (see page 2)

**General Requirements:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Review the [Solicitation Requirements](#) in the OJP Funding Resource Center.

**Scope Requirement:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s) of \$1,750,000.

**Eligibility Requirement:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible applicants are units of state government and federally recognized Indian tribal governments (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior) that can demonstrate substantial completion of the Justice Reinvestment Initiative model (see Selection Criteria on page 24).

**What an Application Should Include:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) (see page 13)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Project Abstract (see page 13)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Program Narrative (see page 14)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Budget Detail Worksheet (see page 17)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Budget Narrative (see page 17)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Employee Compensation Waiver request and justification (if applicable) (see page 11)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting

available at [ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.htm](http://ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.htm)  
(see page 11)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) (see page 22)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see page 18)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see page 18)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status (see page 18)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Attachments
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Letter(s) from JRI task force or oversight group (if applicable), demonstrating how the strategy expressed in the proposal complements the existing reinvestment strategies and documenting the group's support. If such a group is active, BJA considers this letter to be an important indication that the state has engaged in the strategic planning necessary to this program.(see page 19)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Letters of Support from All Key Partners (see page 19)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ State-Specific Performance Measures (see page 19)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Project Timeline (see page 19)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Position Descriptions (see page 19)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Documentation of Reinvestment Match (if applicable) (see page 19)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications (see page 19)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see page 20)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (if applicable) (see page 21)

\*These elements are the basic minimum requirements for applications. Applications that do not include these elements shall neither proceed to peer review nor receive further consideration by BJA.