

**Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)
FY 2011 Second Chance Act Technology Careers Training Demonstration Projects
for Incarcerated Adults and Juveniles
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

General

1. What are the purposes and expectations for this program?

The Second Chance Act strengthens jurisdictions characterized by large numbers of returning offenders. Within the context of this initiative, federal awards may be made to states, units of local government, territories, and federally recognized Indian tribes to provide technology career training to persons confined in state prisons, local jails, and juvenile residential facilities. The goal of this program is to increase the post-release employability of offenders in related technology-based jobs and career fields. The objective of the program is to establish and provide technology career training programs to train incarcerated adults and juveniles during the 3-year period before release from a prison, jail, or juvenile facility.

2. What are the eligibility requirements under this program?

Applicants are limited to states, units of local government, territories, and federally recognized Indian tribes (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior).

3. Are there specific requirements that must be adhered to for the program?

To receive an award under this announcement, applicants must adhere to the following deliverables and mandatory requirements:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of technological training for offenders reentering the community from prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities.
- Specify and include a process or plan for identifying, referring, and assessing potential participants into the training program.
- Include a curriculum that helps participants acquire and develop skills needed to build potentially successful careers in technology-related fields. The training curriculum must identify necessary skills and competencies, provide real-world work experience, teach transferable job skills and soft skills to help prepare for post-release reentry and employment, and provide resources to support training in technology areas.
- Provide incarcerated adults and juveniles with paths to career opportunities in technology-based fields by utilizing a variety of learning strategies to assist with performing work-related activities.
- Incorporate the following activities: address skills and competencies demanded by the targeted technology career; support participants' advancement along a defined career pathway; and, where applicable, result in a recognized certificate, degree, or license that indicates a level of mastery and competence in a given technology based on the type of training completed.
- Highlight, when at all possible, evidence-based programs or practices.
- Restrict access to the Internet by incarcerated persons, as appropriate, to ensure public safety.
- Submit to BJA a report no later than 90 days after the last day of the final fiscal year of the award that describes and assesses the uses of award funds during the preceding fiscal year.

4. What is the deadline for submitting an application?

All applications are due by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on March 3, 2011.

5. What is the potential project length for an award?

As required by the statute, any awards made under this program will be made for a period of up to 12 months.

6. What are the award amounts for projects?

Contingent upon the availability of funds, awards of up to \$750,000 each may be made. Pending the outcome of the FY 2011 appropriations process anticipated in March 2011, BJA may make as few as no awards and as many as five awards this fiscal year under this program. All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

7. When will applicants be notified if they are successful?

Awards should be announced before the end of the federal fiscal year on September 30, 2011.

8. How quickly after receiving notice will a grant recipient be expected to launch their program?

Actual funding access to award recipients is dependent on final budget clearance and adherence to Special Condition requirements. However, award recipients should anticipate begin providing services no later than 90 days after receiving notice.

9. Can agencies that received Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 awards under the Second Chance Act Section 115, also apply for funding again under the FY 2011 solicitation?

There is no regulation that prohibits FY 2010 award recipients from applying again for funding. However, applicants that received FY 2010 awards may not be able to demonstrate the same degree of need as new unfunded applicants.

Target Population

10. What is the target population for this program?

The target population should be incarcerated adults and juveniles within a 3-year period before release from a prison, jail, or juvenile facility. The target population for the initiative must be a specific subset of the population of individuals convicted as an adult or adjudicated as a juvenile, and incarcerated in a state, local, or tribal prison; jail or a juvenile detention/correctional facility; juvenile camp; juvenile community-based program; or a juvenile residential facility. For federally recognized Indian tribes, the individuals may be housed in a tribal, state, regional, county, or local jail facility pursuant to state or tribal law.

Applicants must provide justification for selecting the target population and provide supporting documentation for their decision.

11. What is the definition of a “high risk offender”?

There is no official definition contained in the Second Chance Act for “high risk” offenders. However, an applicant should use the definition adopted by their particular jurisdiction. In identifying the target population applicants should be mindful of the requirement to track participants on a quarterly basis.

12. Is the applicant agency required to concentrate efforts on offenders returning to a specific geographic community, or can it be a statewide initiative (regardless of the community where the offender is returning)?

Due to the competitive nature of this solicitation the applicant is encouraged to provide as much justification for selecting the target population and providing support documentation for their decision. In addition, applicants need to be aware of the requirements to establish a baseline rate for the target population and the need to track the members of the target population on a quarterly basis.

13. May funded programs target specific people who are overrepresented in the criminal justice system?

As a condition for receiving funding, recipients must comply with applicable federal civil rights laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Federal law prohibits a recipient of funding from discriminating in the delivery of services or benefits on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disability. While applicants may design their program to maximize participation by any population overrepresented in the criminal justice system, they may not accept or reject otherwise eligible participants on the basis of their race.

Program-Specific Requirements

14. For the purposes of the solicitation, how is “technology career” defined?

The specific type of technology-based field(s) incorporated into the training program is at the discretion of the applicant. However, the applicant must be able to justify the selected training as technology-related. Some examples of technology-based fields include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Computer assisted design in engineering and construction.
- Information technology development and design.
- “Green-technology”-related projects.
- Braille transcription training and certification.
- Wireless and broadband deployment.
- Computer science and programming.
- Other fields as justified by the eligible applicant.

15. Are applicants required to collaborate with technology industry-related organizations to provide resources and expertise?

It is not required or mandatory that applicants collaborate with technology industry-related organizations. However, priority consideration will be given to applications that partner with technology industry-related organizations and other entities that can provide resources or expertise to the project. Applicants should demonstrate a high degree of collaboration with workforce employers, and provide documentation demonstrating partnerships, agreements, or memoranda of understanding with relevant employers in the technology areas to which program participants are likely to return.

In addition, priority consideration will be given to applicants that partner with technology industry-related organizations and other entities (including local and small businesses) willing to hire and support high-risk offenders through the learning and job training process.

16. What requirements must technology industry-related organizations meet to qualify as partner agencies?

Technology industry-related organizations and other entities must provide resources or expertise to the project and be willing to hire high-risk offenders.

17. Can programs offered to individuals in jails be designed to begin in jail and continue after release due to the shorter lengths of stays?

The solicitation requires that programs must focus on incarcerated adults and juveniles during the 3-year period before release from a prison, jail, or juvenile facility. So programs may be established in a pre-release jail setting if individuals are incarcerated in jail for that length of time.

18. Are applicants required to restrict access to any technology tools or resources?

Yes. Applicants must restrict access to the internet by incarcerated persons, as appropriate, to ensure public safety.

19. Can successful applicants provide post-release services to program participants?

Yes. Programs may provide post-release services for a maximum six-month period that provides support for program participants engaged in paths to technology-based careers. However, programs must include a pre-release component during the period of incarceration and cannot be focused solely on post-release services.

20. Can successful applicants provide assistance with identifying post-release employment opportunities?

Yes. Award funds may be used to provide job search and placement assistance in the technology field, including stipend support for participants/employers where appropriate. In addition, applicants can also provide career counseling, work-based learning, and other activities as justified by the applicant (where appropriate).

Performance Measures

21. What are the performance measures for this program?

The performance measures will require the tracking of key data points. An example would be the Performance Measure, "Percentage of trainees who successfully completed the in-person training program," which will require the grantee to provide the following data points:

- Number of individuals who completed the training
- Number of individuals who attended each training

A complete list of the Performance Measures can be found on pages 7-9 of the solicitation.

22. What software or tools should grantees use to track performance measures? Are these tools provided by BJA?

Applicants will be required to report their performance measures in BJA's Performance Measurement Tool (PMT). All applicants selected for an award will subsequently be provided training and additional information on the PMT.

23. How long will grantees need to track client's performance measure data listed in solicitation? Beyond the funding period?

Recipients may be required to track clients beyond the end of the period for which they receive federal funding. BJA will provide further guidance and assistance to recipients on data collection.

Budget/Allowable Uses

24. What are the allowable uses of funding under this program?

Approved uses for award funds under the technology training program may include the following:

- Classroom occupational training.
- Training activities that lead to permanent employment in a technology related field.
- Alignment with apprenticeship programs in the technology field.
- Basic skills training that includes:

- Adult basic education
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Job readiness training
- Job search and placement assistance in the technology field.
- Career counseling, work-based learning, and other activities as justified by the applicant (where appropriate).
- Equipment or supplies necessary for participation and completion of the training program.
- Training instructors with technology career experience.
- Post-release services for a maximum 6-month period that provides support for program participants engaged in paths to technology-based careers, including voucher/stipend support.

25. Can grant funds be used to provide services to family members of incarcerated individuals participating in the grant program?

No.

26. Can grant funds be used to subsidize employers or fund transitional employment programs?

Yes. Award funds may be used for post-release services for a maximum 6-month period that provides support for program participants engaged in paths to technology-based careers, including voucher/stipend support.

27. Does the entire award amount need to be used within the award period?

No. No-cost extensions will be available to grantees, subject to the approval of BJA. If all award funds are not used (spent) within the award period and completion of the project, the funds will be de-obligated.

28. Are there any limitations on how award funds can be used for employee compensation?

With respect to any award of more than \$250,000 made under this solicitation, federal funds may not be used to pay total cash compensation (salary plus bonuses) to any employee of the award recipient at a rate that exceeds 110% 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.

A recipient may compensate an employee at a higher rate, provided the amount in excess of this compensation limitation is paid with non-federal funds. The limitation on compensation rates allowable under an award may be waived on an individual basis at the discretion of the Assistant Attorney General (AAG) for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP).

29. Is there a match requirement for this program?

This solicitation does not require a match.

30. Some federal grants require applicants to set aside funds for travel to mandatory grantee meetings. Should mentoring grant applicants budget for any particular training or technical assistance?

Applicants must budget funding to travel to U.S. Department of Justice-sponsored grant meetings. Applicants should estimate the costs of travel and accommodations for three staff to attend two meetings in Washington, D.C.

Collaboration

31. Can a collaboration of entities apply as one applicant?

Yes. However, only one state, unit of local government, territory, or federally recognized Indian tribe, must be designated as the “official” applicant. Priority consideration will be given to applications that demonstrate a high degree of collaboration with workforce employers, and provide documentation demonstrating partnerships, agreements, or memoranda of understanding with relevant employers in the technology areas to which program participants are likely to return.

Technical Application Questions

32. Does the budget narrative count against the 15 page limit?

No.

33. Are there any priority considerations that will be given when evaluating applications for awards?

Priority consideration will be given to applications that:

- Partner with technology industry-related organizations and other entities that can provide resources or expertise to the project. Applicants should demonstrate a high degree of collaboration with workforce employers, and provide documentation demonstrating partnerships, agreements, or memoranda of understanding with relevant employers in the technology areas to which program participants are likely to return.
- Provide training to offenders within 12–18 months prior to release to ensure the training is not obsolete and still current, useable, and transferable.
- Target high-risk offenders for program participation using validated assessment tools. Examples of high-risk offenders may include, but are not limited to: sex offenders, mentally ill offenders, offenders dually diagnosed with major mental health disorders and alcohol or substance addictions at the same time, and other offenders.
- Assess the local demand for employees trained in their targeted field, in the areas to which their program participants are likely to return, to improve the likelihood of post-release employment.
- Partner with technology industry-related organizations and other entities (including local and small businesses) willing to hire and support high-risk offenders through the learning and job training process.
- Provide ongoing training to employers and potential employers on successful approaches to working with trainees/employees engaged through the program.
- Provide individualized education and reentry plans for offenders participating in the training program.
- Leverage existing resources (including current Second Chance programs) to continue the training, job placement, career, and reentry success during the community release phase of reentry.
- Incorporate “peer” mentors when appropriate and include a plan for recruiting, training, and supervising mentors.

34. What is the selection process for grant awards under the program?

All applications will be peer reviewed based on the solicitation requirements. The Directors of BJA and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) will then make award recommendations to the AAG for OJP, who will make final determinations.

35. If the state is not applying, can more than one local jurisdiction apply in that state?
Yes, it is possible for several cities, counties, and the state to apply since all are independent jurisdictions.

36. Is there a percentage breakdown for allocation to state versus local government?
No. BJA is cognizant of the need for geographical distribution as well as some level of equity among states, locals, and tribes.

37. How will submissions from multiple jurisdictions in the same state be viewed? How would it reflect on a state if multiple agencies applied from that state?
Submissions from multiple jurisdictions in the same state will be viewed on the individual merit of each application that meets the solicitation requirements.

Other

38. Will there be future opportunities to apply for funding under this program?
All future BJA funding opportunities will be based on Congressional approved appropriations.

39. Can grant funds be used to enhance existing reentry programs, or are funds limited to new programs?
Federal funds cannot be used to supplant existing services. Federal funds provided under the Second Chance Act are meant to be one of the sources of program funding. They may not be used to replace other funding sources.

40. Is there someone specific to contact with questions about the process or program?
For technical assistance with submitting the application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726 or via e-mail to support@grants.gov. The [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) Support Hotline hours of operation are 24 hours, 7 days a week, except federal holidays.

For assistance with any other requirement of this solicitation, contact the BJA Justice Information Center at 1-877-927-5657. The BJA Justice Information Center hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date.