

**Second Chance Act Technology Careers Training Demonstration  
Projects for Incarcerated Adults and Juveniles  
FY 2013 Competitive Grant Announcement**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**General**

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

The goal of this program is to increase the post-release employability of offenders in 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 6-to-18-month 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:

- Establish and provide technology career training programs for incarcerated adults or juveniles during the 6-to-18-month period before release from a prison, jail, or juvenile facility. 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.
  - Wireless and broadband deployment.
  - Computer science and programming.
  - Engineering technology fields.
  - Other fields as justified by the eligible applicant based on the assessment of local demand for employees in the areas to which program participants are likely to return and that improve the likelihood of post-release employment.
- Demonstrate a partnership with an employer or employers with technology-related-related employment opportunities and training (that may include tribal, local, and small businesses and colleges) in the geographic areas to which targeted participants are likely to return, and provide documentation demonstrating the partnership, such as a memorandum of agreement (MOA).
- Target medium- and high-risk offenders as identified using a validated assessment tool. "High-risk offenders" are defined as offenders that score moderate-to-high risk based on a validated risk assessment tool. "Risk" is defined as the likelihood that an offender will re-offend upon release from a facility. Applicants must identify the validated assessment tool use and the risk levels eligible for participation in the program.
- Provide a baseline recidivism rate for the proposed target population including documentation to support the development of the rate.

- Restrict access to the Internet by incarcerated persons, as appropriate, to ensure public safety.
- Ensure all program participants receive individualized reentry plans and case management that link them to community-based services and supports post-release.
- Collect and report data on participant post-program employment outcomes and recidivism.
- 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. Are there any priority considerations that will be given when evaluating applications for awards?**

Priority consideration will be given to applicants who:

- Incorporate a “Pay for Success” model into their projects. Under a typical Pay for Success model, service providers either directly or through an intermediary organization secure capital to fund their operations and achieve specified outcomes for a predefined target population. For more information on the Pay for Success model, please see pages 6–7 and the appendix of the solicitation.
- Provide career technology training to incarcerated adult women and juvenile girls in state prisons, local jails, and juvenile residential facilities (including tribal facilities).
- Propose programs through which participants receive industry-recognized certificates that demonstrate successful completion of the training program, better preparing participants for job attainment upon release.
- Provide ongoing training to employers and potential employers on successful approaches to working with trainees/employees engaged through the program.
- Demonstrate the leveraging of private, local, state, tribal, or federal resources (cash or in-kind) to support and/or sustain the proposed project.

**5. Is the FY 2013 solicitation different from the solicitations in previous years?**

Yes, there have been a number of changes made to the mandatory requirements and priority considerations. Some of these changes include:

- Applicants must provide technology career training to participants within 6-to-18 months prior to release. In previous solicitations, the timeframe specified was three years prior to release.
- Demonstrating partnerships with employers for technology-related employment opportunities and training is now a mandatory requirement, rather than a priority consideration.
- Targeting medium-to-high-risk offenders is now a mandatory requirement, rather than a priority consideration.
- Ensuring that all program participants receive individualized reentry plans and case management is now a mandatory requirement, rather than a priority consideration.
- Incorporating a mentoring component is no longer a priority consideration, though it is an allowable use of grant funds.

Please carefully review the mandatory requirements, priority considerations, and selection criteria in the solicitation to ensure that your application meets the current requirements and guidelines.

**Target Population**

**6. What is the target population for this program?**

The target population is limited to medium- and high-risk incarcerated adults or juveniles within a 6-to-18-month period before release from a prison, jail, or juvenile facility. Participants must have been

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 are also highly encouraged to examine the solicitation's "Priority Considerations" and "Selection Criteria" for additional information regarding the applicant's target population.

**7. 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)?**

Applicants can focus their programs on either a statewide or local initiative. However, 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 provide a baseline recidivism rate for the proposed target population, including documentation to support the development of the rate. If the applicant does not have a baseline recidivism rate for the proposed target population, they should provide a recidivism rate for a similar population and explain how that population is similar to the target group.

**8. 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**

**9. 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.
- Wireless and broadband deployment.
- Computer science and programming.
- Engineering technology fields.
- Other fields as justified by the eligible applicant based on the assessment of local demand for employees in the areas to which program participants are likely to return and that improve the likelihood of post-release employment.

**10. Are applicants required to collaborate with technology industry-related organizations?**

Yes. 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 provide ongoing training to employers and potential employers on successful approaches to working with trainees/employees engaged through the program.

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

Applicants must demonstrate a partnership with an employer(s) with technology-related employment opportunities and training (that may include tribal, local, and small businesses and colleges) in the geographic areas to which targeted participants are likely to return, and provide documentation demonstrating the partnership, such as a memorandum of agreement (MOA).

**12. 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 or juveniles during the 6-to-18-month 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 at least six months.

**13. 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.

**14. Should applicants provide post-release services to program participants?**

Yes. Every grantee should ensure that all program participants receive individualized reentry plans and case management that link them to community-based services and supports post-release. 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.

**15. 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. In addition, applicants can also provide career counseling, work-based learning, and other activities as justified by the applicant (where appropriate).

**Performance Measures**

**16. What are the performance measures for this program?**

The performance measures will require the tracking of key data points including program completion, services provided, and recidivism. A list of possible performance measures for this grant program appears on pages 10-11 of the solicitation. A complete list of the current Performance Measures for this grant program can be found at [www.bjaperformancetools.org/help/scatechnologycareersquestionnaire.pdf](http://www.bjaperformancetools.org/help/scatechnologycareersquestionnaire.pdf). However, applicants should be aware that the performance measures may change prior to the start of their award.

**17. 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. The PMT collects aggregate program-level data; BJA does not provide software or tools for tracking individual client data. Each grantee should have an electronic system for tracking individual client data, which will be necessary to complete the PMT.

**18. Must grantees be able to track client's performance measure data?**

Yes. As part of the Mandatory Requirements applicants must be able to collect and report data on participant post-program employment outcomes and recidivism.

**18. My agency/organization does not currently have a baseline recidivism rate for the target population we would like to serve under this grant. Are there other recidivism figures that would be acceptable to apply for the grant?**

If applicants do not have a baseline recidivism rate for the proposed target population, they may provide a recidivism rate for a similar population and explain how that population is similar to the target group. Since the baseline recidivism rate will be used to assess the success of each program, the baseline recidivism rate should be as specific, and matched to the applicant's target population, as possible.

### **Budget/Allowable Uses**

#### **19. What are the allowable uses of funding under this program?**

Approved uses for award funds under a comprehensive technology training application 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. Equipment costs must be fully justified and applicants should note that these funds are not intended to pay for equipment only.
- Training instructors with technology career experience.
- Recruiting, training, and supervising mentors, including peer mentors.
- Reentry planning, case management, and post-release services—for a maximum 6-month period—that provide support for program participants engaged in paths to technology-based careers.
- Cognitive behavioral therapy that changes criminogenic thinking as a critical element for successful reentry.

#### **20. What are unallowable uses of award funds?**

In addition to the unallowable costs identified in the OJP Financial Guide, award funds may not be used for the following:

- Prizes/rewards/entertainment/trinkets (or any type of monetary incentive)
- Client stipends
- Gift cards
- Vehicles
- Food and beverage

In an attempt to minimize conference costs, no OJP funding can be used to purchase food and/or beverages for any meeting, conference, training, or other event. Exceptions to this restriction may be made only in rare cases where such sustenance is not otherwise available (i.e., extremely remote areas), or where a special presentation at a conference requires a plenary address where there is no other time for sustenance to be attained. Such an exception would require prior approval from OJP. This restriction does not apply to water provided at no cost, but does apply to any and all other refreshments, regardless of the size or nature of the meeting. Additionally, this restriction does not impact direct payment of per diem amounts to individuals in a travel status under your organization's travel policy.

Updated Department of Justice and OJP guidance on conference planning, minimization of costs, and conference cost reporting is accessible on the OJP website at

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/confcost.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/confcost.htm).

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

No.

**23. 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.

**24. 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 and returned to the federal government.

**25. 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). The waiver request and justification should be submitted with the application and should include the following: 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 that is to be done.

**26. Is there a match requirement for this program?**

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

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

Applicants must budget funding to travel to DOJ-sponsored grant meetings. Applicants should estimate the costs of travel and accommodations for three staff to attend two 3-day meetings in Washington, DC.

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

**Collaboration**

**28. 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.

**Technical Application Questions**

**29. What is the deadline for submitting an application?**

All applications are due by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on March 11, 2013. However, please note that

staff assistance through the BJA Justice Information Center is only available on March 11 until 8:00 pm eastern time.

**30. What are the award amounts for projects?**

Contingent upon of appropriated funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law, BJA anticipates it will make up to 10 awards of up to \$750,000 each.

**31. What is the award period for these projects?**

Applications will be made for a 12-month project period to begin on October 1, 2013.

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

All applications will be peer reviewed based on the solicitation requirements. BJA/AAG leadership will then make final determinations.

**33. When will applicants be notified if they are successful?**

Awards should be announced before the end of the federal fiscal year on September 30, 2013.

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

Although the 12-month project period will begin on October 1, 2013, actual funding access to award recipients is dependent on final budget clearance and adherence to Special Condition requirements. However, award recipients should anticipate beginning to provide services no later than 90 days after receiving notice.

**35. Can agencies that received prior awards under the Second Chance Act apply for funding under the FY 2013 solicitation?**

There is no regulation that prohibits previous award recipients from applying again for funding. However, those previously funded applicants may not be able to demonstrate the same degree of need as new unfunded applicants.

**36. Does the budget narrative count against the 15-page limit?**

No.

**37. 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.

**38. 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.

**39. 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**

**40. Will there be future opportunities to apply for funding under this program?**

All future BJA funding opportunities will be based on Congressional appropriations. BJA may elect to make awards for applications submitted under this solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on the merit of the applications and the availability of appropriations.

**41. 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 to be used to

replace other funding sources.

**42. 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](mailto:support@grants.gov). The 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, via e-mail at [JIC@telesishq.com](mailto:JIC@telesishq.com), or via live web chat at [www.justiceinformationcenter.us](http://www.justiceinformationcenter.us). The BJA Justice Information Center (JIC) 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.