Presenters

• Andrea Borchardt – Senior Forensics Policy Advisor
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SECTION 1

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION
What is the Office of Justice Programs?

- The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) provides grant funding, training, research, and statistics to the criminal justice community.

- OJP is one of three grant-making components of the Department of Justice along with the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).
U.S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Justice Assistance

Mission: BJA’s mission is to provide leadership and services in grant administration and criminal justice policy development to support state, local, and tribal justice strategies to achieve safer communities. BJA works with communities, governments, and nonprofit organizations to reduce crime, recidivism, and unnecessary confinement, and promote a safe and fair criminal justice system.

Karhlton F. Moore, BJA Director

https://bja.ojp.gov/
How BJA Supports the Field

**Investments**
Provide diverse funding to accomplish goals.

**Sharing Knowledge**
Research, develop, and deliver what works to build capacity and improve outcomes.

**Engagement**
Consult, connect, and convene.
SECTION 2

IMPORTANT DATES AND INFORMATION
Grants.gov and JustGrants

Two-step process

**Step 1:** The applicant must register for this opportunity in Grants.gov at https://grants.gov/register and submit by the Grants.gov deadline the required Application for Federal Assistance standard form (SF-424) and a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL). To register in Grants.gov, the applicant will need to ensure that its System for Award Management (SAM) registration is current.

**Grants.gov DUE April 29, 2024; 8:59 pm ET**

**Step 2:** The applicant must then submit the full application including attachments in JustGrants at JustGrants.usdoj.gov. To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline. OJP encourages applicants to review, the “How to Apply” section in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide and the JustGrants website for more information, resources, and training.

**JustGrants DUE May 6, 2024; 8:59 pm ET**
BJA Funding Webinars

Funding Resources

Available Funding

 BJAs has started releasing FY24 solicitations. See the Available Funding page to learn about current funding opportunities.

Funding Application

Review the YouTube Terms of Service and the Google Privacy Policy.

Watch this short video to learn about the different steps associated with submitting a funding application.

Funding Webinars

Register for upcoming funding webinars and access materials from past events.

BJA.gov
Learn About the Department of Justice’s Grants and Payment Management Systems

https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov
Important Dates

FY 2024 Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence

Opportunity ID: O-BJA-2024-172014
Closing Date: May 6, 2024
Posting Date: March 6, 2024
Grants.gov Deadline: April 29, 2024, 8:59 pm Eastern
Application JustGrants Deadline: May 6, 2024, 8:59 pm Eastern
SECTION 3

PROGRAM OVERVIEW
Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence provides funding to States, units of local government, and public institutions of higher education to assist in defraying the costs associated with postconviction case identification, case review, evidence location, and DNA testing in violent felony cases (as defined by state law) where the results of such testing might show actual innocence.

Additional information, including funded awards and current funding opportunities, can be found at: https://bja.ojp.gov/program/postconviction-testing-dna-evidence/overview
SECTION 4

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS
Eligibility – Page 4

• State governments
• City or townships governments
• Public- and State-controlled institutions of higher education
• County governments

For purposes of this solicitation, “state” means any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
### Funding Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competition ID</th>
<th>Competition Title (Category Name)</th>
<th>Expected Number of Awards</th>
<th>Dollar Amount for Award</th>
<th>Performance Start Date</th>
<th>Performance Duration (Months)</th>
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<tr>
<td>C-BJA-2024-00018-PROD</td>
<td><strong>Category 1</strong>: Case reviews and DNA testing</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>10/01/2024</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-BJA-2024-00019-PROD</td>
<td><strong>Category 2</strong>: Improve preservation of biological evidence and/or modernization of record storage systems</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>10/01/2024</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Category 1: BJA seeks to help defray the costs (e.g., additional personnel, overtime, testing supplies, and services) associated with postconviction DNA testing for violent felony offenses (as defined by state law) in which actual innocence might be demonstrated. Funds may be used to review suitable postconviction cases and locate and analyze biological evidence.

Category 2: BJA provides funding to assist entities to improve the preservation of biological evidence and/or modernize record retention for postconviction violent felony offenses (as defined by state law) in which actual innocence might be demonstrated.

BJA will prioritize applications for Category 1 over those in Category 2 for funding. Once funding decisions for Category 1 are complete, remaining funding will be distributed to the relevant applications in Category 2, as appropriate.
Definitions – Page 6-8

Case Review

Review of files or documentation of postconviction cases of violent felony offenses (as defined by state law) by appropriate persons (e.g., prosecutors, public defenders, law enforcement personnel, and medical examiners) to determine whether biological evidence exists that might, through DNA analysis, demonstrate the actual innocence of the person previously convicted. This includes actions such as, but not limited to, document review, filing of petitions/motions with the court, and litigation following receipt of DNA results and up to the point of exoneration, dismissal of charges, and acceptance of Alford plea.
Goals and Objectives

The goal of this program is to assist states and units of local government with postconviction DNA testing in cases of violent felony offenses where actual innocence might be demonstrated.
Goals and Objectives: Category 1

- Identify potential postconviction DNA testing cases.
- Review appropriate postconviction cases to identify those in which DNA testing could prove the actual innocence of a person convicted of a violent felony offense as defined by state law.
- Locate biological evidence associated with such postconviction cases.
- Perform DNA analysis of appropriate biological evidence and report and review DNA test results.
Goals and Objective: Category 2

Locate, record, store, and retain biological evidence in adjudicated cases in accordance with best practices.

Modernize evidence retention practices for biological evidence in accordance with best practices.

Modernize and digitize the storage of existing files and records in adjudicated cases.

Implement modern, digitized files and record retention systems.
SECTION 5

FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION
Federal Award Information – Page 9

Anticipated amount of funding:
  • $12,000,000

Anticipated number of awards to be funded:
  • 10 in Category 1
  • 2 in Category 2

Period of performance start date:
  • October 1, 2024

Period of performance duration:
  • 36 months

Anticipated maximum dollar amount per award:
  • Up to $1,000,000 in Category 1
  • Up to $500,000 in Category 2
## Previous Year Application Data

### Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence Application Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2020</th>
<th>FY 2021</th>
<th>FY 2022</th>
<th>FY 2023</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apps</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awds</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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SECTION 6

APPLICATION SUBMISSION & APPLICATION CHECKLIST
The following application elements must be included in the application to meet the basic minimum requirements to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding:

- SF-424 and SF-LLL
- Proposal Abstract
- Proposal Narrative
- Budget Web-based Form which includes the budget details and the budget narrative
OJP screens applications to ensure they meet the **basic minimum requirements** prior to conducting the peer review.

Applications that meet the basic minimum requirements, will be evaluated for technical merit by a peer review panel(s).

Although specific requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all OJP solicitations:

- The application must be submitted by an **eligible type of applicant**.
- The application must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable).
- The application must be **responsive to the scope** of the solicitation.
- The application must include all items necessary to meet the **basic minimum requirements**.
Merit Review Criteria – Pages 15-18

1. Statement of the Problem/Description of the Issue (20%) - evaluate the applicant’s understanding of the program/issue to be addressed.

2. Project Design and Implementation (50%) - evaluate the adequacy of the proposal, including the goals, objectives, timelines, milestones, and deliverables.

3. Capabilities and Competencies (15%) - evaluate the administrative and technical capacity of the applicant to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives.

4. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation’s Performance Measures (5%) - evaluate the applicant’s understanding of the performance data reporting requirements and the plan for collecting the required data.

5. Budget (10%) - evaluate for completeness, cost effectiveness, and allowability (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

Each criteria is divided by Category 1 and Category 2
Project Design and Implementation – Category 1

• Describe the implementation approach, including case review selection criteria and the target number of cases to be reviewed with award funds.

• Discuss how funding under this initiative will help to identify and test postconviction DNA cases and demonstrates an awareness of current methods for DNA analysis of forensic evidence. Past performance successes may be noted but must not be a predominant part of the project design and implementation.

• Provide awareness of potential pitfalls and describe the mitigation strategies should pitfalls be encountered.
• Describe the implementation approach, including specific timeframes of focus for relevant impacted cases (e.g., cases from 1970 to 1990). Provide a good faith estimate of the number of cases to be targeted for improved preservation of biological evidence and/or digitization of case records in adjudicated cases.

• Discuss how funding under this initiative will improve the review of postconviction cases involving DNA evidence.

• Discuss any policies or procedures that will be implemented to improve the preservation of biological evidence and/or digitization of case records in adjudicated cases.
If you plan to conduct Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching (FGGS) using funds from your federal award, you must make note of the following:

No DNA profiles (including SNP profiles generated for FGG testing) generated with funding from this award may be entered into any non-governmental database (e.g. GEDmatch) without prior express written approval from BJA. Each profile tested must receive such written approval from BJA.

Program activity involving FGGS is subject to the DOJ Interim Policy on Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching or to the final policy, when issued.
Mandatory Training

Attendance at BJA’s Forensics Programs Grantees Meeting (Virtual Event):

• Award recipients must register for and attend BJA’s annual “virtual” 2-day forensics workshop for all recipients.

• Key personnel (up to three representatives per award recipient) will be expected to attend each annual meeting during the course of the grant period (starting in 2025).

• The workshops will focus on the elements of a successful project and key issues surrounding postconviction DNA testing.
Expenses – Permitted – Page 19

• Salary and benefits of additional employees
• Engage additional (temporary personnel)
• Overtime
• **Victim Advocates – or victim treatment providers**
• Travel (limited) – Funds may be used for expenses directly associated with case ID, case review, location of evidence or DNA analysis; modernization of evidence retention practices, modernization of the storage of files/records
• Computer equipment – to be used exclusively for case ID, case review, location of evidence, DNA analysis or modernizing and digitizing the storage of existing files and records
• Lab supplies – for DNA analysis of biological evidence
• **Evidence management/preservation/tracking software, supplies and equipment**
• Procurement from private labs of DNA analyses
• Training (limited) – only for directly related to case ID, case review, location of evidence and DNA analysis OR modernization of evidence retention practices for biological evidence or modernization of the storage of existing files/records in adjudicated cases
Expenses – Not Permitted – Page 21

Among other things, funds may not be used for:

- Costs associated with civil litigation related to the original criminal conviction.
- Salaries, benefits, or overtime for staff who are not directly engaged in case identification, case review, location of biological evidence, or DNA analysis of biological evidence or directly engaged in modernization of evidence retention practices for biological evidence or modernization of the storage of existing files/records in adjudicated cases.
- Laboratory equipment.
- Construction.
- Renovation.
- Office furnishings.
- Witness travel.
- General litigation training or non-postconviction training.
- Direct administrative expenses exceeding 5% of the award.
Certification – Pages 23-24

Certification as to Provision of Postconviction DNA Testing and Preservation of Biological Evidence

An applicant must submit an express certification from the chief legal officer of the state (typically the Attorney General) that the state:

1. Provides postconviction DNA testing of specified biological evidence under a state statute, or under state rules, regulations, or practices, for persons convicted after trial and under a sentence of imprisonment or death for a state offense of murder or forcible rape, in a manner intended to ensure a reasonable process for resolving claims of actual innocence.

2. Preserves biological evidence secured in relation to the investigation or prosecution of a state offense of murder or forcible rape, under a state statute, local ordinances, or state or local rules, regulations, or practices, in a manner intended to ensure that reasonable measures are taken by all jurisdictions within the state to preserve such evidence.
Certification – Pages 23-24

Certification as to Provision of Postconviction DNA Testing and Preservation of Biological Evidence

Note: The certification must be executed by the chief legal officer of the appropriate state for each state for which postconviction cases are sought to be funded consistent with this solicitation. Funds will not be made available to applicants (if awarded) that fail to submit a properly executed certification(s).

Certification must be made on BJA-provided template (link in solicitation):
https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/fy24-postconviction-cert.pdf
Certification as to Provision of Postconviction DNA Testing and Preservation of Biological Evidence

While it may be submitted with the application package, submission of this certification is not required at the time of application. If an award is made, access to award funds will be withheld until this certification is received and approved by BJA.

Note to all applicants, in particular, applicants proposing postconviction DNA testing projects involving cases outside of the applicant’s state: The certification must be executed by the chief legal officer of the appropriate state for each state for which postconviction cases are sought to be funded consistent with this solicitation. Funds will not be made available to applicants (if awarded) that fail to submit a properly executed certification(s).
Application Checklist – Pages 29-32

BJA FY24 Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence

This application checklist has been created as an aid in developing an application. For more information, reference The OJP Application Submission Steps in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide and the DOJ Application Submission Checklist.

Pre-Application

Before Registering in Grants.gov
- Confirm your entity’s registration in the System Award Management (SAM.gov) is active through the solicitation period; submit a new or renewal registration in SAM.gov if needed (see Application Resource Guide)

Register in Grants.gov
- Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password (see Application Resource Guide)
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC) (see Application Resource Guide)
SECTION 7
APPLICATION RESOURCES
Application Assistance

Grants.gov

• Provides technical assistance with submitting the **SF-424** and **SF-LLL**.
  o **Customer Support Hotline**
    ▪ 800–518–4726 or 606–545–5035
    ▪ Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.
  o **Web and Email**
    ▪ [https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html](https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html)
    ▪ support@grants.gov

• Provides information on available federal funding opportunities for various federal agencies.

JustGrants Technical Support

Provides technical assistance with submitting the full application in DOJ’s Justice Grants System (JustGrants).

• **Customer Support Hotline:**
  o 833–872–5175
  o Monday – Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. ET
  o Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. ET

• **Web and Email**
  o [https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/user-support](https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/user-support)
  o JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov
Application Assistance and Support (cont.)

OJP Response Center

• Provides solicitation support and general assistance
• Email - grants@ncjrs.gov
• Toll free at 800–851–3420
• TTY at 301–240–6310 (hearing impaired only)

The OJP Response Center operates from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) Monday–Friday and from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET on the solicitation closing date.

Subscribe

• Subscribe to receive email notifications of new funding opportunities and other resources
  • Sign-up to receive the twice monthly JUSTINFO newsletter as well as the weekly Funding News email
  • Subscribe at https://www.ojp.gov/subscribe and be sure to select “Grants/funding” as an area of interest
Learn About the Department of Justice’s Grants and Payment Management Systems

The Justice Grants System (JustGrants) is the Department of Justice’s grants management system for the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW).

The JustGrants Resources website is an entryway into information about JustGrants and the system itself. Through this portal both award recipients and applicants can access training resources and user support options, find answers to frequently asked questions and sign up for the JustGrants Update e-newsletter.

Users can also log in to JustGrants through the site.

News Flash

Feb 21: Register Now! March Dates Added for Virtual Q&A Sessions

Aug 10: Review New and Updated JustGrants FAQs

https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/
Email Updates
Text OJP to 468-311 to subscribe.

(Message and data rates may apply.)
Stay Connected!

- **Facebook**: [https://www.facebook.com/DOJBJA](https://www.facebook.com/DOJBJA)
- **X**: [https://x.com/DOJBJA](https://x.com/DOJBJA)
- **YouTube**: [https://www.youtube.com/dojbja](https://www.youtube.com/dojbja)
- Use the QR code to subscribe to “Justice Matters” and “News From BJA” to receive the latest information from BJA and the field.
- For information on funding opportunities, publications, and initiatives, visit **BJA’s website**: [www.bja.ojp.gov](http://www.bja.ojp.gov).
Contact the OJP Response Center:

- Email: grants@ncjrs.gov
- Toll free: 800–851–3420
- TTY: 301–240–6310 (hearing impaired only)

The Response Center hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday.
Reminder: Dual Deadlines

Applications must be submitted in a two-step process, each with its own deadline:

• **Step 1**: Submit an SF-424 and an SF-LLL at [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov).

• **Step 2**: Submit the full application, with attachments, at [JusticeGrants.usdoj.gov](https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov).

**NOTE**: Submission deadline times for both Grants.gov and JustGrants are now 8:59 p.m. ET, not 11:59 p.m. ET as in past years.

Read the solicitation carefully for further guidance.
Important Dates and Information

**Solicitation Title:** BJA FY24 Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence

**Assistance Listing Number:** 16.820

**Grants.gov Opportunity Number:** O-BJA-2024-172014

**Solicitation Release Date:** March 6, 2024

**Step 1:** Application Grants.gov **Deadline:** 8:59 p.m. Eastern Time on April 29, 2024

**Step 2:** Application JustGrants **Deadline:** 8:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 6, 2024
Quick Reference: Important Contacts

For technical assistance submitting the SF-424 and SF-LLL into Grants.Gov, call: 800–518–4726 or 606–545–5035, 24 hours a day, or email: support@grants.gov.

For technical assistance submitting the full application into JustGrants, call: 833–872–5175, 7–9 ET, M–F, and 9–5 ET, weekends and holidays, or email: JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov.

For technical assistance with the programmatic requirements, call the OJP Response Center: 800–851–3420, 10–6 ET, M–F, or email: grants@ncjrs.gov.
Questions?

Enter in the Q&A box and send to All Panelists.
Andrea Borchardt
Senior Forensics Policy Advisor
Bureau of Justice Assistance
202-598-1721
Andrea.Borchardt@usdoj.gov

Application Assistance:
support@grants.gov
JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov
grants@ncjrs.gov