BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

PROSECUTING COLD CASES USING DNA

FY 2024 SOLICITATION

March 28, 2024

Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice

Presenters

- **Carey Hendricks** – Policy Advisor, BJA Policy Office
- **Monte Evans** – State Policy Advisor, BJA Programs Office
- **Esmeralda Woche** – Division Chief, BJA Programs Office

Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction to OJP and BJA
- Program Overview
- Guest Speakers
- Eligibility and Application Requirements
- Application Resources
- Q&A

SECTION 1

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

BJA
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice

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)**.

BJA – Bureau of Justice Assistance

BJS – Bureau of Justice Statistics

NIJ – National Institute of Justice

OVC – Office for Victims of Crime

OJJDP – Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

SMART – Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking

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

Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice

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.

Poll Question

Has your organization been awarded federal grants in the past?

- Yes, my organization has extensive experience with federal grants.
- Yes, though my organization does not currently have any federal grants.
- My organization has limited experience with federal grants.
- My organization is new to federal grants and looking to learn more!

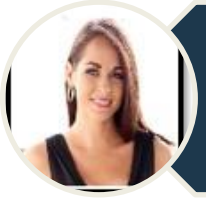
SECTION 2

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

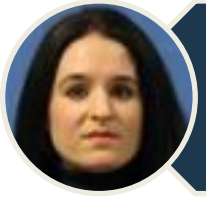
BJA
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice

BJA Prosecuting Cold Cases Using DNA (COLD) Program Team

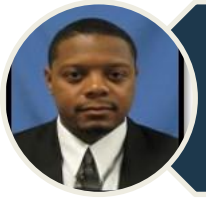
Carey Hendricks – Policy Advisor, Policy Office



Hannah Barcus – Associate (Contractor), Policy Office



Esmeralda Woche – Division Chief, Programs Office



Monte Evans – State Policy Advisor, Programs Office

Application submission

Two-Step Process

Step 1: The applicant must submit by the Grants.gov deadline the required Application for Federal Assistance standard form (SF-424) and a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form when they register in Grants.gov at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html

To register in Grants.gov, the applicant will need to ensure that its System for Award Management (SAM) registration is current.

Grants.gov DUE DATE: April 25, 2024; 8:59 pm EDT

Application Submission

Two-Step Process

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 DATE: May 2, 2024; 8:59 pm EDT

COLD Program Overview

COLD is a competitive grant program designed to decrease the number of violent cold case crime cases awaiting prosecution. It supports the **prosecution** of violent cold case crimes, **where a suspect (known or unknown) has been identified through DNA evidence.**

Main Goals

1. Prosecute violent cold case crimes
2. Decrease the number of violent cold case crime cases awaiting prosecution

Prosecuting agencies, law enforcement, state agencies, or local crime laboratories may partner with the agency that serves as the lead applicant for the award to work toward achieving the program goal of seeking resolution in violent cold case crimes. **However, a prosecuting entity must be fully engaged in the project.**

BJA

Suspect DNA

- "DNA from a suspect" means a CODIS-eligible, or otherwise statistically relevant, short tandem repeat (STR or Y-STR) profile that has been generated from crime scene evidence and is attributed to a suspect.

- Suspect may be known or unknown
  - CODIS Hit or no Hit (John Doe warrant type of situation)
  - No untested SAKs
  - **Does not mean DNA evidence present, but no testing has occurred**

- CODIS is the acronym for the Combined DNA Index System and is the generic term used to describe the FBI's program of support for criminal justice DNA databases as well as the software used to run these databases.

Suspect DNA requirements

- Per the solicitation, familial searching must be conducted (if legally permissible in your state) prior to any forensic genetic genealogy (FGG) work, however exceptions can be granted by BJA, if warranted.

- **If you do not already have a statistically relevant suspect DNA profile, you cannot use COLD funds to work a case**

Cold Case Inventory

It is required that an inventory of your agency's violent cold case crimes that you wish to utilize grant funds for be submitted and approved by BJA

- Awardees will have an initial period to complete the inventory and access up to 25% of funds.
  - Once the inventory has been approved by BJA, the award condition that is withholding the remaining funds will be lifted provided that all other conditions have been met.

- The inventory certification must include:
  - Year the crime occurred
  - Year suspect profile developed
  - What technology developed the profile
  - What level of CODIS is the profile in
  - Has the profile had a CODIS hit
  - If the profile is NOT in CODIS, does your prosecutor deem the profile to be statistically relevant/significant?

- **The application must describe how the inventory requirement will be met**.

FY 2024 Allowable uses of funds

Provided that a DNA profile attributed to a known/unknown suspect has been developed, this funding allows for:

- Efforts to identify, locate, collect, process, and analyze evidence, including non-DNA evidence, to assist prosecutors with the litigation of violent cold case crimes where a suspect has already been identified with DNA evidence (suspect may be known or unknown)
- Investigative activities including crime and forensic analyses
- Familial Searching if applicable in your state (required for FGG)

- FGG testing
- Phenotyping/ancestral analysis
- Salary/benefits of employees including overtime
- Travel for investigative purposes, evidence collection
- Consultants
- Computer equipment

Unallowable uses of funds

- Salaries, benefits, or overtime for staff who are not directly engaged in prosecution, case review, investigation, location of evidence, and forensic analysis of evidence for violent crime cold cases where DNA from a suspect has been identified (suspect(s) may be known or unknown)
- Laboratory equipment
- Portable investigative equipment
- Vehicles
- Construction
- Renovation
- Rental costs for space
- Office furnishings

- Costs for general cold case investigations — those that do not involve UCR, Part 1 violent crimes, and do not have suspect DNA identified
- General laboratory capacity enhancement or general casework backlog reduction
- Unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), including unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAV), and all accompanying accessories to support UAS or UAV

Additional unallowable uses of funds that should be noted:

This funding **may not** be used for:

- Cases that were not approved via the Cold Case Inventory
- Exhumations
- Testing of human remains where a suspect's DNA profile has not been generated
- Conference, membership fees, and/or registrations, without approval of BJA

The full list of funding restrictions are provided in the solicitation on page 22.

Requirements of funding for FGG

This program's funding may be used for FGG with the following requirements and notes:

- The profile of the unknown offender **must be uploaded to CODIS** but have yet to generate a hit associated with a known suspect in the database.
- It is highly recommended that a relationship with the FBI's Investigative Genealogy team be established for the investigative portion of FGG (at no cost to the grantee).
- Awardees who are proposing to conduct in-house FGG (i.e., tree building and the subsequent steps in the process) will be required to complete the BJA/FBI archived FGG training as well as any future BJA/FBI FGG trainings that may occur during the lifespan of the grant.
- Awardees must adhere to the DOJ's Interim Policy on FGG/FGGS as well as the final policy if/when issued.

ViCAP and NamUS

- Award recipients must use federal resources such as FBI's Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (ViCAP) and NIJ's National Unidentified and Missing Persons System (NamUs), when applicable.
- All criteria cases must be entered into ViCAP before the end of the grant period.
  - Award recipients should budget 60 minutes per ViCAP entry plus additional time for searches and follow up on leads.
  - This cannot exceed 10% of the budget
- FBI ViCAP staff are available to assist award recipients with gaining entry into ViCAP, provide training, and conducting crime analyses.
- All applicable cases must be entered into NamUs and ViCAP before the end of the grant period.

Application considerations and tips

- If the lead applicant is a non-prosecuting entity, a Letter of Support/Commitment must be submitted outlining the prosecutor(s) full engagement in the project.
- Spell out first-time use of acronyms in your application, including the abstract.
- Confirm you are following the Proposal Narrative (a-d) guidelines in the solicitation beginning on page 17.
- Make certain your project does not describe testing evidence in order to obtain a suspect DNA profile as this is unallowable.
- If you have past funding from this program (active or non-active) and would like to continue or need additional resources to complement your current/past projects, include a description of your current project's funding as well as the project's overall history in your narrative along with a justification for additional funding.

SECTION 3

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility

- State governments
- Special district governments
- City or township governments
- County governments
- Native American tribal organizations (other than federally recognized tribal governments)
- Native American tribal governments (federally recognized)
- Other
  - State and local prosecuting agencies
  - Law enforcement
  - State agencies

BJA will consider applications under which two or more entities (project partners) would carry out the federal award; however, only one entity may be the applicant for the solicitation.

Application Review Process

1. OJP screens applications to ensure they meet the basic minimum requirements prior to conducting the peer review.

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

    - Proposal Abstract
    - Proposal Narrative
    - Budget Web-based Form (The web-based form includes the budget details and the budget narrative.)

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.

Additional Application Attachments

Other common application elements:

- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist (NEPA)
- Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire
- Disclosure of Duplicate Cost Items
- Letter(s) of Commitment
- DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirement
- Accreditation Documentation (if applicable)
- List of Key Personnel

Merit Review Criteria

- **Statement of the Problem/Description of the Issue (15 Percent)** - Evaluate the applicant's understanding of the program/issue to be addressed.
- **Project Design and Implementation (40 Percent)** – Evaluate the strength of the proposal, including the information provided in the goals, objectives, timelines, milestones, and deliverables.
- **Capabilities and Competencies (20 Percent)** – Evaluate the administrative and technical capacity of the applicant to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives.
- **Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (5 Percent)** – Evaluate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements and the plan for collecting the required data.
- **Budget (15 Percent)** – Evaluate for completeness, cost effectiveness, and allowability (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).
- **Other (5 percent)** – Evaluate the applicant's understanding of the program's suspect DNA requirement as it pertains to the definition herein.

Important: Beginning on page 26 of the solicitation- you will find a further breakdown and details regarding the Review Criteria

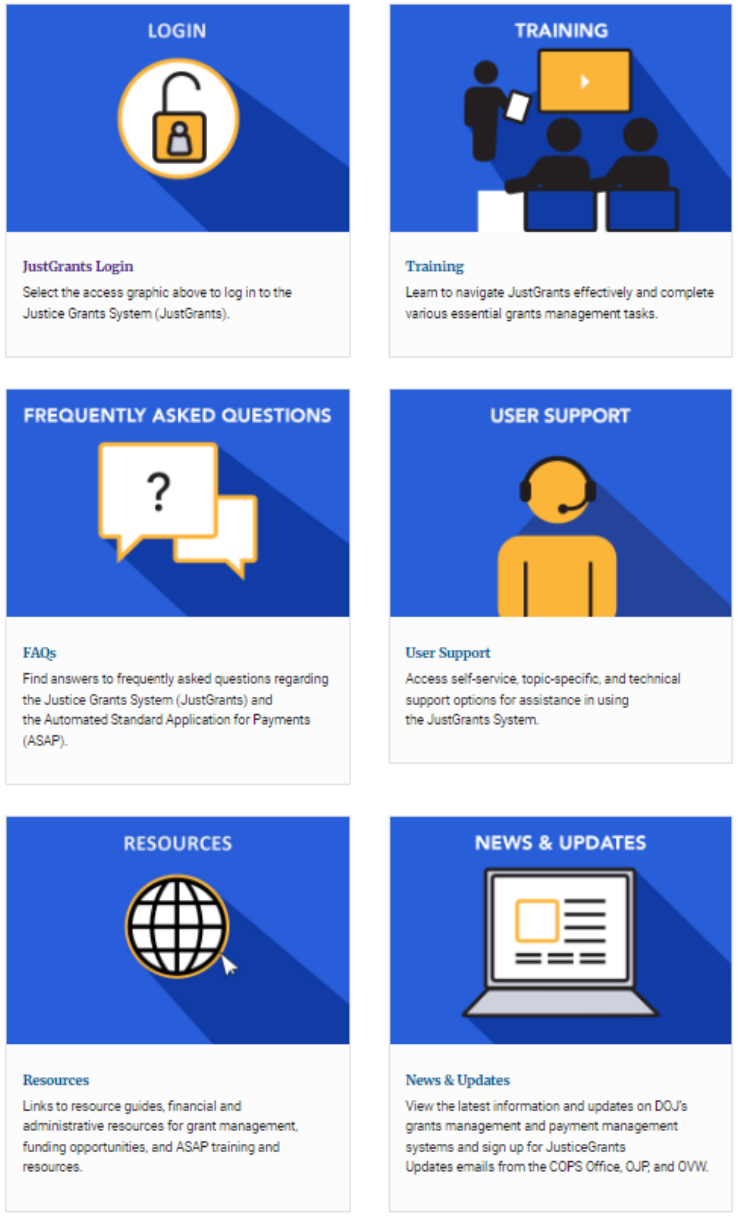
SECTION 4

APPLICATION RESOURCES

Contents

- How To Apply
- Application Elements and Formatting Instructions
  - Complete the Application for Federal Assistance(Standard Form (SF)-424)
  - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
    - Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)
  - Proposal Abstract
  - Budget Preparation and Submission Information
    - Detailed Computations and Allowable Costs
    - Narrative Justification for Every Cost
    - Consolidated Budget Summary
    - Information on Proposed Subawards (if any) and Proposed Procurement Contracts (if any)
    - Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)
  - Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)
- Application Attachments
  - Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications (Duplication in Cost Items)
  - Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees
  - Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity
  - Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation
- Financial Information
  - Financial Management and System of Internal Controls
  - Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (including Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status)
  - Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement
  - Pre-agreement Costs (also known as Pre-award Costs)
  - Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver
  - Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs
  - Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)
- Application Review Information
- Federal Award Administration Information
  - Federal Award Notices
  - Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements
  - Information Technology (IT) Security Clauses
  - General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements
- Programmatic Information
  - Evidence-Based Programs or Practices
  - Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities
  - Note on Project Evaluations
- Other Information
  - Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. § 552 and 5 U.S.C. § 552a)
  - Provide Feedback to OJP
  - To Become an OJP Peer Reviewer

https://www.ojp.gov/funding/apply/ojp-grant-application-resource-guide



https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/

Application Assistance

Grants.gov

- Provides technical assistance with submitting the **SF-424** and **SF-LLL.**
  - **Customer Support Hotline**
    - 800–518–4726 or 606–545–5035
    - Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.
  - **Web and Email**
    - 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:**
  - 833–872–5175
  - Monday – Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. ET
  - Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. ET
- **Web and Email**
  - https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/user-support
  - JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov

Email Updates
Text OJP [your email address] to 468-311 to subscribe.

(Message and data rates may apply.)

ShutterStock (see reuse policy).

Stay Connected

- Subscribe to:
  - OJP News Releases for the latest OJP press releases and publication advisories
  - JUSTINFO, a twice-monthly email newsletter
  - Funding News , a weekly notice of new grant opportunities and application tips
  - *JusticeGrants Update* e-newsletter for the latest information and updates on JustGrants, DOJ's grants management system
  - OJP email newsletters and topical messages available from OJP program offices (BJA, BJS, NIJ, OJJDP, OVC, and SMART)
- Sign up for U.S. Department of Justice Email Updates

https://www.ojp.gov/subscribe

Stay Connected!

- **Facebook:** https://www.facebook.com/DOJBJA
- **X:** https://x.com/DOJBJA
- **YouTube:** 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.

Additional Questions?

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. (April 25, 2024)
- **Step 2**: Submit the full application, with attachments, at JusticeGrants.usdoj.gov. (May 2, 2024)

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.

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.**