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The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice is seeking applications for funding for research and development that can enhance the forensic uses of DNA technology. This solicitation focuses on technologies that result in faster, more robust, more informative, less costly, or less labor-intensive identification, collection, preservation, and/or analysis of DNA evidence collected from crime scenes. This program furthers the Department's mission by sponsoring research to provide objective, independent, evidence-based knowledge and tools to meet the challenges of crime and justice, particularly at the State and local levels.

## **Solicitation: Forensic DNA Research and Development**

### **Eligibility**

(See "Eligibility," page 4)

### **Deadline**

**Registration with Grants.gov is required prior to application submission.**  
(See "Registration," page 3)

All applications are due **December 29, 2008, 11:59 p.m. eastern time.**

### **Contact Information**

For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, contact Lois Tully, Deputy Chief, Investigative and Forensic Sciences Division, at 202-307-0694 or [lois.tully@usdoj.gov](mailto:lois.tully@usdoj.gov).

This application must be submitted through Grants.gov. For technical assistance with submitting the application, call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 1-800-518-4726 or send an e-mail to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

**Note:** The Grants.gov Support Hotline hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. eastern time.

**Grants.gov Funding Opportunity No. NIJ-2009-1937**

**SL# 000846**

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# Forensic DNA Research and Development

## CFDA No. 16.560

### Overview

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is the research, development, and evaluation agency of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and a component of the Office of Justice Programs (OJP). NIJ provides objective, independent, evidence-based knowledge and tools to enhance the administration of justice and public safety. NIJ solicits applications to inform its search for the knowledge and tools to guide policy and practice.

NIJ is seeking applications for research and development that can enhance the forensic uses of DNA technology. This solicitation focuses on technologies that result in faster, more robust, more informative, less costly, or less labor-intensive identification, collection, preservation, and/or analysis of DNA evidence collected from crime scenes. Priority will be given to proposals that focus on the following:

1. General improvements to the “front end” of the forensic DNA analysis process.
2. Physical separation of the components of a mixture.
3. Body-fluid/cell-type identification and characterization.
4. Identification and/or characterization of biological marker systems that have the potential to reveal additional or more powerful information about the source of the biological evidence.
5. Improved tools for examining aged, degraded, limited, damaged, inhibited, or otherwise compromised DNA evidence.
6. Novel methods for genetic profiling.

### Deadline: Registration

Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, processing delays may occur and **it can take up to several weeks for first-time registrants to receive confirmations/user passwords**. OJP highly recommends that applicants start the registration process as early as possible to prevent delays in submitting an application package to our agency by the application deadline specified. The registration process for organizations involves these steps: (1) Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number; (2) Register your organization with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database; (3) Register with Grants.gov’s Credential Provider and obtain a username and password; (4) Register with Grants.gov to establish yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (5) The E-Business Point of Contact (POC) assigns the “Authorized Applicant Role” to you. For more information about the registration process, go to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). **Note: Your CCR registration**

**must be renewed once a year. Failure to renew the CCR registration may prohibit submission of a grant application through Grants.gov.**

## **Deadline: Application**

The due date for applying for funding under this announcement is **December 29, 2008, 11:59 p.m. eastern time.**

Within 24 to 48 hours after submitting your electronic application, you should receive an e-mail validation message from Grants.gov. The validation message will tell you whether the application has been received and validated or has been rejected, and why.

**Important:** You are urged to submit your application at least 72 hours prior to the due date of the application to allow time to receive the validation message and to correct any problems that may have caused the rejection notification.

If you experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond your control, you must contact OJP staff **within 24 hours after the due date** and request approval to submit your application. At that time, OJP staff will require you to e-mail the complete grant application, along with your DUNS number, and provide a Grants.gov Help Desk tracking number(s). After OJP reviews all of the information submitted and contacts Grants.gov to validate the technical issues reported by the applicant, OJP will contact you to either approve or deny the request.

To ensure a fair competition for limited discretionary funds, the following conditions are not valid reasons to permit late submissions: (1) failure to begin the registration process in sufficient time; (2) failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its Web site; (3) failure to follow all of the instructions in the OJP solicitation; and (4) technical issues experienced with the applicant's computer or information technology (IT) environment.

## **Eligibility**

In general, NIJ is authorized to make grants to, or enter into contracts or cooperative agreements with, States (including territories), local governments (including federally recognized Indian tribal governments that perform law enforcement functions), nonprofit and profit organizations (including tribal nonprofit and profit organizations), institutions of higher education (including tribal institutions of higher education), and certain qualified individuals. Foreign governments, foreign organizations, and foreign institutions of higher education are not eligible to apply.

**Faith-Based and Other Community Organizations:** Consistent with Executive Order 13279, dated December 12, 2002, and 28 C.F.R. Part 38, it is DOJ policy that faith-based and other community organizations that statutorily qualify as eligible applicants under DOJ programs are invited and encouraged to apply for assistance awards to fund eligible grant activities. Faith-based and other community organizations will be considered for awards on the same basis as other eligible applicants and, if they receive assistance awards, will be treated on an equal basis with all other grantees in the administration of such awards. No eligible applicant or grantee will be discriminated for

or against on the basis of its religious character or affiliation, religious name, or the religious composition of its board of directors or persons working in the organization.

Faith-based organizations receiving DOJ assistance awards retain their independence and do not lose or have to modify their religious identity (e.g., remove religious symbols) to receive assistance awards. DOJ grant funds, however, may not be used to fund any inherently religious activity, such as prayer or worship. Inherently religious activity is permissible, although it cannot occur during an activity funded with DOJ grant funds; rather, such religious activity must be separate in time or place from the DOJ-funded program. Further, participation in such activity by individuals receiving services must be voluntary. Programs funded by DOJ are not permitted to discriminate in the provision of services on the basis of a beneficiary's religion.

If your organization is a faith-based organization that makes hiring decisions on the basis of religious belief, it may be entitled, under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb, to receive Federal funds and yet maintain that hiring practice, even if the law creating the funding program contains a general ban on religious discrimination in employment. For the circumstances under which this may occur, and the certifications that may be required, please see the section titled "Funding to Faith-Based Organizations" on the "Other Requirements for OJP Applications" Web page at [http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other\\_requirements.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other_requirements.htm).

Applicants are also encouraged to review the "Civil Rights Compliance" section of the "Other Requirements for OJP Applications" Web page, which also can be found at [http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other\\_requirements.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other_requirements.htm).

**American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Tribes and/or Tribal Organizations:** If a grant application is being submitted on behalf of a tribe or tribal organization, a current authorizing resolution of the governing body of the tribal entity or other enactment of the tribal council or comparable government body authorizing the inclusion of the tribe or tribal organization named in the application must be included with the application.

## **Specific Information—Forensic DNA Research and Development**

The goal of NIJ's Forensic DNA Research and Development Program is to harness the tremendous growth in the broader scientific fields, such as molecular biology, genetics, and biotechnology, and direct it toward the development of highly discriminating, reliable, cost-effective, and rapid forensic DNA testing methods.

Forensic DNA analysis has played a crucial role in the investigation and resolution of thousands of violent crimes since the late 1980s. Currently, short tandem repeats (STRs) are the most widely used markers for forensic DNA testing. Because of their high discriminatory power, good resolution of alleles, and the ability to rapidly process samples using multiplexed polymerase chain reaction (PCR), 13 STRs have been chosen as the core loci upon which the FBI's National DNA Index System (NDIS) has been built.

In recent years, other genetic polymorphisms, such as those found in the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) genome and the Y chromosome, have been shown to provide effective

results that can augment traditional STR data. MtDNA analysis is especially useful for cases involving extremely degraded or limited biological samples, such as skeletal remains or shed hairs. Y-chromosome markers can be beneficial in resolving sexual assault cases. Single nucleotide polymorphisms, now known to be abundant throughout the nuclear genome, may become important genetic markers for the forensic scientist in the future. The emerging discipline of proteomics may include forensic applications that have not yet been explored. An increased understanding of these and other systems with potential forensic utility, as well as the continued development of advanced methods (particularly those amenable to automated and high-throughput processes) for examining biological evidence, will greatly benefit the field.

Applicants to this solicitation should demonstrate an appreciation of and general familiarity with the technologies currently used for analyzing DNA evidence. They should have a general understanding of issues such as chain of custody, courtroom admissibility, degraded or limited DNA, and mixtures of DNA from multiple tissues or individuals. Applicants should also have an appreciation of the costs to implement and maintain the proposed technology as well as the training that will be required.

NIJ strongly encourages researchers to seek guidance from or partner with appropriate State or local crime laboratories. Such associations foster a greater understanding of the issues unique to the field of forensic DNA and may strengthen the scope of the proposed research plan.

Information on projects funded under NIJ's Forensic DNA Research and Development Program can be found on <http://www.dna.gov/research/>.

**Suggested Areas of Research:** Tools and technologies that will allow faster, more reliable, more robust, more informative, less costly, or less labor-intensive identification, collection, preservation, and/or analysis of DNA evidence collected from the crime scene.

**Priority will be given to proposals focusing on the following needs and requirements:**

- **General improvements to the “front end” of the forensic DNA analysis process.** Examples include:
  1. Development of rapid screening methods for use at crime scenes to help assess the probative value of biological materials.
  2. Development of nondestructive or minimally destructive methods for biological evidentiary sample identification and/or collection.
  3. Development of improved tools (e.g., substrates, devices, methods) for biological evidence preservation and/or storage. The tool must effectively maintain the integrity of the sample, and efficiently and consistently release the sample for subsequent analysis.
  4. Development of nondestructive or minimally destructive methods for DNA extraction.

5. Development of genetic screening methods for assessing probative value of evidentiary samples. This method could help crime laboratory analysts to focus the full analysis on the most probative samples, thus reducing the time currently spent on interpretation and reporting of samples that are nonprobative.
- **Physical separation of cells (sperm cells from female epithelial cells, epithelial cells from different sources, etc.) or other components (e.g., polymerase chain reaction [PCR] products) in mixtures from two or more individuals or sources.** A method that can physically separate the various components of a mixture will benefit the overall DNA analysis method. The separation method must be successful on typical forensic samples (limited in yield, etc.) and must not reduce the efficiency of downstream DNA profiling methods.
  - **Body-fluid/cell-type identification and characterization.** Biological evidence is frequently a combination of various body fluids/cell types (e.g., sperm/semen, vaginal fluid/vaginal epithelial cells, saliva/oral epithelial cells). A confirmatory method for determining the source of the components present in the biological evidence would benefit the overall DNA analysis process.
  - **Identification and/or characterization of biological markers that have the potential to reveal additional or more powerful information about the source of the biological evidence.** Examples include markers that have the potential to provide forensically useful information about the phenotype of the DNA contributor, markers that can reveal information about the circumstances surrounding a crime, markers that can augment other forensic DNA marker systems, or markers that can increase the discriminatory power of DNA (including the differentiation of twins).
  - **Improved tools for examining aged, degraded, limited, damaged, inhibited, or otherwise compromised DNA evidence.** Examples include:
    1. Development of tools to determine the condition of the DNA to assist crime laboratory analysts in selecting the appropriate DNA profiling approach.
    2. Development of methods to repair damaged DNA evidence to increase the likelihood of obtaining a DNA profile.
    3. Improvements to the methods for detection and/or removal of PCR inhibitors.
    4. Other methods that will maximize the success rate of the analysis of compromised DNA evidence.
    5. Improvements to the overall understanding of the processes and mechanisms that result in the inability to obtain a DNA profile from biological evidence.

- **Novel approaches for genetic profiling.** Examples include streamlined, portable, high-throughput, more informative, more sensitive, less susceptible to inhibition, non-PCR-based, and/or all-inclusive (e.g., DNA extraction through analysis) methods for analysis of biological evidence.

**Please note:** All applicants under this solicitation must comply with Department of Justice regulations on confidentiality and human subjects protection. See the Confidentiality and Human Subjects Protection Compliance section under “Other Requirements for OJP Applications” at [http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other\\_requirements.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other_requirements.htm).

**What will *not* be funded:**

1. Provision of training or direct service.
2. Proposals primarily to purchase equipment, materials, or supplies. (Your budget may include these items if they are necessary to conduct applied research, development, demonstration, evaluation, or analysis.)
3. Work that will be funded under another specific solicitation.
4. Proposals focusing on nonhuman DNA.
5. Proposals that do not contain a research and/or development component or are otherwise nonresponsive to the general goals of this solicitation.

**Cost of proposed work:** Total funding for this solicitation and the number of awards made will depend on the availability of funds, the quality of the applications, and other pertinent factors. **All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.** In recent years, approximately 8 percent of applications to NIJ's annual Science and Technology solicitations have been funded. NIJ funding for an individual research or development project rarely exceeds \$500,000 annually, though total funding for projects requiring multiple years to complete has exceeded \$1 million in some cases. If feasible, NIJ recommends that applicants divide the proposed work into discrete phases, with each phase resulting in the delivery of a measurable deliverable. Applicants should try to structure the phases so that the funding required in any fiscal year will not exceed \$500,000. Although NIJ cannot guarantee that subsequent phases, stages, or tasks will be funded, this approach will enable NIJ to fund the proposed work incrementally, depending on, among other things, the quality of the deliverable at the end of each phase, strategic priorities, and the availability of funds. However, applicants should not divide their work if it is not feasible to do so without impairing the technical and programmatic soundness of their approach. Note: Deliverables (e.g., technical reports, proof-of-concept demonstrations, prototypes, etc.) will be required at the end of each phase to enable NIJ to assess the progress of the work and assist NIJ in making reasoned determinations as to the suitability of funding the next phase of the work.

Applicants should be aware that the total period of an award, including one that receives additional funding, ordinarily will not exceed 3 years.

A grant made by NIJ under this solicitation may account for up to 100 percent of the total cost of the project. See "Cofunding" under "What an Application Must Include."

**Limitation on use of award funds for employee compensation; waiver:** No portion of any award of more than \$250,000 made under this solicitation may be used to pay any portion of the total cash compensation (salary plus bonuses) of any employee of the



award recipient whose total cash compensation 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. (The salary table for SES employees is available at <http://www.opm.gov>.)

This prohibition may be waived at the discretion of the Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs. An applicant that wishes to request a waiver should include a detailed justification in the budget narrative for the application.

## Performance Measures

To assist in fulfilling the Department’s responsibilities under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), P.L. 103–62, applicants who receive funding under this solicitation must provide data that measure the results of their work. Performance measures for this solicitation are as follows:

Objective	Performance Measures	Data Grantee Provides
<p>Develop tools and technologies that will allow faster, more robust, more informative, less costly, or less labor-intensive identification, collection, preservation, and/or analysis of DNA evidence collected from crime scenes.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relevance to the needs of the field as measured by whether the grantee’s substantive scope did not deviate from the funded proposal or any subsequent agency modifications to the scope.</li> <li>2. Quality of the research as assessed by peer reviewers.</li> <li>3. Quality of management as measured by whether significant interim project milestones were achieved, final deadlines were met, and costs remained within approved limits.</li> <li>4. If applicable, number of fielded technologies.</li> <li>5. If applicable, number of NIJ final grant reports, NIJ research documents, and grantee research documents published.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A final report providing a comprehensive overview of the project and a detailed description of the project design, data, and methods; a full presentation of scientific findings; and a thorough discussion of the implications of the project findings for criminal justice practice and policy.</li> <li>2. Quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, and a final progress report.</li> <li>3. If applicable, each data set that was collected, acquired, or modified in conjunction with the project.</li> <li>4. If applicable, description of fielded technologies.</li> <li>5. If applicable, citation to report(s)/document(s).</li> </ol>

## How to Apply

DOJ is participating in the e-Government initiative, one of 25 initiatives included in the President’s Management Agenda. Part of this initiative—Grants.gov—is a “one-stop storefront” that provides a unified process for all customers of federal grants to find funding opportunities and apply for funding.

**Grants.Gov Instructions:** Complete instructions can be found at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). If you experience difficulties at any point during this process, please call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 1-800-518-4726, Monday-Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. eastern time.

**Funding Opportunities With Multiple Purpose Areas:** Some OJP solicitations posted to Grants.gov contain multiple purpose areas, denoted by the individual Competition ID. If you are applying to a solicitation with multiple Competition IDs, you must select the appropriate Competition ID for the intended purpose area of your application. The application will be peer reviewed according to the requirements of the purpose area under which it is submitted.

**Note: OJP's Grants Management System (GMS) does not support Microsoft Vista or Microsoft 2007.** Therefore, OJP will not review any application whose attachments are in Microsoft Vista or Microsoft 2007 format. GMS downloads applications from Grants.gov and is the system in which OJP reviews applications and manages awarded grants. Applications submitted via GMS must be in the following formats: Microsoft Word (\*.doc), Word Perfect (\*.wpd), PDF files (\*.pdf), or Text Documents (\*.txt) and may include Microsoft Excel (\*.xls) files. GMS is not yet compatible with Vista and cannot yet process Microsoft Word 2007 documents saved in the new default format with the extensions of ".docx." Please ensure the documents you are submitting in Grants.gov are saved using "Word 97-2003 Document (\*.doc)" format. Additionally, 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."

**CFDA Number:** The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for this solicitation is 16.560, titled "National Institute of Justice Research, Evaluation, and Development Project Grants," and the Grants.gov funding opportunity number is **NIJ-2009-1937**.

**A DUNS number is required:** The Office of Management and Budget requires that all businesses and nonprofit applicants for Federal funds include a DUNS (Data Universal Numeric System) number in their application for a new award or renewal of an award. Applications without a DUNS number are incomplete. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of 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, simple, one-time activity. Obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or by applying online at <http://www.dnb.com/us>. Individuals are exempt from this requirement.

**Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is required:** In addition to the DUNS number requirement, OJP requires that all applicants (other than individuals) for Federal financial assistance maintain current registrations in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database. The CCR database is the repository for standard information about Federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. Organizations that have previously submitted applications via Grants.gov are already registered with CCR, as it

is a requirement for Grants.gov registration. Please note, however, that applicants must update or renew their CCR registration at least once per year to maintain an active status. Information about registration procedures can be accessed at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov).

## What an Application Must Include

Responding to this solicitation involves a two-step process. The first step involves submitting a concept paper, which will be reviewed by a panel comprising both expert practitioners and technologists. The deadline for the concept paper is **December 29, 2008, 11:59 p.m. eastern time**. If the concept paper is recommended and approved, the applicant will be contacted, invited to submit a full proposal, and given a proposal deadline. Extensions to deadlines are generally not granted.

### Concept Paper

A concept paper should capture the essence of the full proposal and will be evaluated using the same selection criteria (see “Selection Criteria” section). The main difference between the concept paper and the full proposal is that the concept paper is much shorter and does not contain a detailed budget. The concept paper should be a single document and must not exceed 10 double-spaced pages in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Appendices are not required; however, if included, will count toward the 10-page limit. Concept papers exceeding the page limit may be truncated prior to evaluation or may not receive further consideration.

The concept paper should contain the sections listed below.

- a. Abstract (not to exceed 600 words).
- b. Table of contents.
- c. Main body, which includes:
  - Purpose, goals, and objectives.
  - Review of relevant literature.
  - Research design and methods.
  - Implications for criminal justice policy and practice in the United States.
  - Management/staffing plan and organization.
  - Dissemination strategy.
- d. Concept paper funding estimate, which includes an estimate of funding required for the full scope, duration, and cost of the project as to give an indication of the overall costs of the project, as well as the costs of each major phase or component of the project.
- e. Chart for timeline, research calendar, or milestones.

## Full Proposal

Invited full proposals should include the following:

### Standard Form 424

#### Program Narrative

The Program Narrative includes:

- a. Abstract (not to exceed 600 words).
- b. Table of contents.
- c. Main body, which includes:
  - Purpose, goals, and objectives.
  - Review of relevant literature.
  - Research design and methods.
  - Implications for criminal justice policy and practice in the United States.
  - Management plan and organization.
  - Dissemination strategy.
- d. Appendixes (not counted against program narrative page limit) include:
  - Bibliography/References (if applicable).
  - List of key personnel (required).
  - Résumés of key personnel (required).
  - List of previous and current NIJ awards (required).
  - Letters of cooperation/support or administrative agreements from organizations collaborating in the project (if applicable).
  - Chart for timeline, research calendar, or milestones (required).
  - Other materials required by the solicitation.

#### Budget Detail Worksheet

The Budget Detail Worksheet, which is only required for the full proposal and not the concept paper, should address the full scope, duration, and cost of the project. The Budget Detail Worksheet should include a breakdown of costs associated with each budget category, including itemizations and calculations where necessary.

The budget must be broken down on a year-to-year basis over the length of the project. That is, if the proposed project is 3 years, then there should be a separate budget for year one, year two, and year three.

Templates for filling out the Budget Detail Worksheet may be found online at [http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/forms/budget\\_detail.pdf](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/forms/budget_detail.pdf), OJP Standard Forms & Instructions. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's Customer Service Center at 1-800-458-0786.

#### Budget Narrative

The Budget Narrative is a plain language description of each of the proposed expenditures listed in the Budget Detail Worksheet. It should clearly explain the purpose and reason for all expenditures in the budget. There should be no ambiguities about any budget item. The narrative should also include details for calculated rates or other figures.

As with the Budget Detail Worksheet, the Budget Narrative must be broken down on a year-to-year basis.

#### **Indirect Rate Agreement** (if applicable)

Applicants that do not have a federally negotiated indirect cost rate and wish to establish one can submit a proposal to their “cognizant” Federal agency. Generally, the cognizant Federal agency is the agency that provides the preponderance of direct Federal funding. This can be determined by reviewing an organization’s schedule of Federal financial assistance. If DOJ is your cognizant Federal agency, obtain information needed to submit an indirect cost rate proposal at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/financialguide/part3/part3chap17.htm>.

#### **Other Program Attachments**

These include several forms, available on OJP’s funding page at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/forms.htm>.

**Page limit:** The program narrative section of invited full proposals must not exceed 25 double-spaced pages in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Abstract, table of contents, charts, figures, appendixes, and government forms do not count toward the 25-page limit for the narrative section.

**Cofunding:** A grant made by NIJ under this solicitation may account for up to 100 percent of the total cost of the project. You must indicate whether you believe it is feasible for you to contribute cash, facilities, or services as non-Federal support for the project. Your application should identify generally any such contributions that you expect to make and your proposed budget should indicate in detail which items, if any, will be supported with non-Federal contributions.

## **Selection Criteria**

Successful applicants must demonstrate the following:

**Statement of the Problem/Program Narrative** (Understanding of the problem and its importance)—(15%)

Include appropriate citations and other information to demonstrate an understanding of the problem and the expected contribution of the proposed research to the field of forensic DNA.

**Project/Program Design and Implementation** (Quality and technical merit)—(30%)

1. Awareness of the state of current research or technology.
2. Soundness of methodology and analytic and technical approach.
3. Feasibility of proposed project and awareness of pitfalls.
4. Innovation and creativity (when appropriate).

**Capabilities/Competencies** (Capabilities, demonstrated productivity, and experience of applicants)—(20%)

1. Qualifications and experience of proposed staff.
2. Demonstrated ability of proposed staff and organization to manage the effort.

3. Adequacy of the plan to manage the project, including how various tasks are subdivided and resources are used.
4. Successful past performance on NIJ grants and contracts (when applicable).

**Budget—(15%)**

1. Total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit.
2. Appropriateness of the budget relative to the level of effort.
3. Use of existing resources to conserve costs.

**Impact/Outcomes and Evaluation (Relevance to policy and practice)—15%**

1. Potential for significant advances in scientific or technical understanding of the problem.
2. Potential for significant advances in the field.
3. Relevance for improving the policy and practice of criminal justice and related agencies and improving public safety, security, and quality of life.
4. Affordability and cost-effectiveness of proposed end products, when applicable (e.g., purchase price and maintenance costs for a new technology or cost of training to use the technology).
5. Perceived potential for commercialization and/or implementation of a new technology (when applicable).

**Dissemination Strategy—(5%)**

1. Well-defined plan for the grant recipient to disseminate results to appropriate audiences, including researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.
2. Suggestions for print and electronic products NIJ might develop for practitioners and policymakers.

**Relevance of the project for policy and practice.**

Higher quality applications clearly explain the practical implications of the project. They connect technical expertise with criminal justice policy and practice. To ensure that the project has strong relevance for policy and practice, some researchers and technologists collaborate with practitioners and policymakers. You may include letters showing support from practitioners, but they carry less weight than clear evidence that you understand why policymakers and practitioners would benefit from your work and how they would use it. While a partnership may affect State or local activities, it should also have broader implications for others across the country.

## **Review Process**

OJP is committed to ensuring a standardized process for awarding grants. NIJ reviews the application to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, achievable, and consistent with program or legislative requirements as stated in the solicitation.

Peer reviewers will be reviewing the applications submitted under this solicitation as well. NIJ may use either internal peer reviewers, external peer reviewers, or a combination of both to review the applications under this solicitation. An external peer reviewer is an expert in the field of the subject matter of a given solicitation who is NOT a current U.S. Department of Justice employee. An internal reviewer is an expert in the

field of the subject matter of a given solicitation who is a current U.S. Department of Justice employee. Applications will be screened initially to determine whether the applicant meets all eligibility requirements. Only applications submitted by eligible applicants that meet all other requirements (such as timeliness, proper format, and responsiveness to the scope of the solicitations) will be evaluated, scored, and rated by a peer review panel. Peer reviewers' ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only. In addition to peer review ratings, considerations may include, but are not limited to, underserved populations, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding.

After the peer review is finalized, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), in consultation with NIJ, conducts a financial review of all potential discretionary awards and cooperative agreements to evaluate the fiscal integrity and financial capability of applicants; examines proposed costs to determine if the budget and budget narrative accurately explain project costs; and determines whether costs are reasonable, necessary, and allowable under applicable Federal cost principles and agency regulations. OCFO also reviews the award document and verifies the OJP Vendor Number.

**When awards will be made:** All applicants, whether they are accepted or rejected, will be notified. The review and approval process takes about 9 months. You should not propose to begin work until at least 9 months after the application deadline on the cover of this solicitation. Also, you should not expect to receive notification of a decision for at least 9 months after that date. Lists of awards are updated regularly on NIJ's Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding/welcome.htm>.

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, all final grant award decisions will be made by the Assistant Attorney General (AAG), who may also give consideration to factors including, but not limited to, underserved populations, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding when making awards.

## **Additional Requirements**

Successful applicants selected for an award must agree to comply with additional applicable requirements prior to receiving grant funding. We strongly encourage you to review the information listed below pertaining to these additional requirements prior to submitting your application. Additional information for each can be found at [http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other\\_requirements.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other_requirements.htm).

- Civil Rights Compliance
- Funding to Faith-Based Organizations
- Confidentiality and Human Subjects Protection
- Anti-Lobbying Act
- Financial and Government Audit Requirements

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- DOJ Information Technology Standards
- Single Point of Contact Review
- Nonsupplanting of State and Local Funds
- Criminal Penalty for False Statements
- Compliance With Office of Justice Programs Financial Guide  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/financialguide/>
- Suspension or Termination of Funding
- Nonprofit Organizations
- For-Profit Organizations
- Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)
- Rights in Intellectual Property
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006

If your proposal is funded, you will be required to submit several reports and other materials, including:

**Final substantive report:** The final report should be a comprehensive overview of the project and should include, among other things, a detailed description of the project design, data, and methods; a full presentation of scientific findings; and a thorough discussion of the implications of the project findings for criminal justice practice and policy. It must contain an abstract of no more than 600 words and an executive summary of no more than 2,500 to 4,000 words.

A draft of the final report, abstract, and executive summary must be submitted 90 days before the end date of the grant. The draft final report will be peer reviewed upon submission. The reviews will be forwarded to the principal investigator with suggestions for revisions. The author must then submit the revised final report, abstract, and executive summary by the end date of the grant. The abstract, executive summary, and final report must be submitted in both paper and electronic formats.

For program evaluation studies, the final report should include a section on measuring program performance. This section should outline the measures used to evaluate program effectiveness, modifications made to those measures as a result of the evaluation, and recommendations regarding these and other potential performance measures for similar programs. (This information will be particularly valuable to NIJ and other Federal program agencies in implementing performance measures for federally funded criminal justice programs.)



**Interim reports:** Grantees must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, a final progress report, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent.