



JUN. 05

NIJ

Solicitation for Proposals

Evaluation of the Helping Outreach Programs to Expand II: Faith-Based and Community Organization Program

Notice:

You *must* submit your application using the Office of Justice Programs' automated Grants Management System. Paper applications will not be accepted. We suggest you begin the process as soon as possible. To start the process, go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>.

Deadline:

July 5, 2005

8 p.m. eastern time

SL 000710

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531

Alberto R. Gonzales
Attorney General

Tracy A. Henke
Acting Assistant Attorney General

Sarah V. Hart
Director, National Institute of Justice

This and other publications and products of
the National Institute of Justice can be found
on the World Wide Web at:

National Institute of Justice
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>

Office of Justice Programs
Partnerships for Safer Communities
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>

Evaluation of the Helping Outreach Programs to Expand II: Faith-Based and Community Organization Program

I. Introduction

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

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) recently released a solicitation for the Helping Outreach Programs to Expand II Program (HOPE II Program). OVC's HOPE II Program solicitation focuses on the problem of reaching underserved victims in high-crime, urban areas.

NIJ seeks applications to evaluate intermediary organizations receiving funding under the HOPE II Program. Applicants should review the original HOPE II Program solicitation thoroughly (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/fund/pdf/txt/HOPEII.pdf>) and have a clear understanding of the goals of the initiative and the types of programs that are being funded.

Due date: The due date is **July 5, 2005**. Extensions to the deadlines are generally not granted.

Page limit: The program narrative section of your proposal must not exceed 30 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 30-page limit for the narrative section. (Peer reviewers are instructed not to read applications that do not conform to these guidelines).

Reasons for rejection: NIJ may reject applications that are incomplete, do not respond to the scope of the solicitation, do not comply with format requirements, or are submitted after the deadline. No additions to the original submission are allowed.

How to submit applications to NIJ: Instructions for applying are in "Guidelines: How to Submit Applications," available on the NIJ Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm#gsya>.

II. Proposal Topics

With this solicitation, NIJ is seeking applications to evaluate intermediary organizations receiving funding under the Helping Outreach Programs to Expand II Program (HOPE II Program). The HOPE II Program solicitation focuses on the problem of reaching underserved victims in high-crime, urban areas. Applicants should review the original HOPE II Program thoroughly and have a clear understanding of the goals of the initiative and the types of programs that are being funded.

About the Special Initiative: HOPE II (Faith-Based and Community Organization Program)

Faith-based and community-based organizations have a long history of bringing aid to crime victims. Crime victims often seek the comfort, guidance, and assistance of faith-based and community-based organizations because these organizations are trusted members of the communities in which they live. The trust and familiarity vested in these organizations by the communities they serve have translated into the ability to provide social services—counseling, shelter, emergency transportation, and other services—to victims of crime. OVC recognizes the value of this history and seeks to promote greater participation of faith-based and community-based organizations in criminal justice programs supported by the Department of Justice through the President's Faith-Based and Community Initiative.

The HOPE II Program recognizes that crime victims living in urban, high-crime jurisdictions face unique barriers to receiving assistance and additional challenges that may not be encountered in other areas. The HOPE II Program works through an intermediary that will (1) support the activities of small, grassroots, faith-based and community-based organizations serving crime victims in urban, high-crime areas through the management of competitive subawards, and (2) provide technical assistance to subgrantees to develop their capacity to provide services to crime victims in urban, high-crime areas.

The following is a list of technical assistance activities that HOPE II intermediaries could provide to subgrantees:

- Incorporation of “best practices” in services to crime victims, including practices that ensure a victim’s safety and their participation in criminal justice proceedings, and community coordination.
- Development of mechanisms to ensure timely and accurate reporting on activities undertaken through this program.

-
- Outreach, recruitment, and management of volunteers and nongovernmental support.
 - Needs assessments to identify a subaward recipient's needs, areas of improvement, or the needs of the community it serves.

With this solicitation, NIJ seeks an evaluator to examine a range of activities and services provided by the HOPE II intermediary and assess the effects of the activities on the improvement of services and the expansion of the organizational capacity of faith-based and community-based organizations. Findings from NIJ's evaluation will allow OVC to refine or enhance administration of the HOPE II Program, as necessary, to better serve faith-based and community-based organizations and, ultimately, the crime victims they serve.

Objective of the Evaluation

NIJ seeks an evaluating organization to design and conduct a preliminary evaluation of the value added to the faith-based and community-based organizations served by a HOPE II Program-sponsored intermediary. The evaluating organization must possess in-depth knowledge about the roles and functioning of intermediaries providing capacity building technical assistance and subawards to faith-based and community-based organizations. The evaluating organization must be experienced in conducting well-designed, rigorous evaluation and knowledgeable and experienced in conducting assessments of organizational change and the development or use of appropriate measures and benchmarks. Further, the evaluating organization must have personnel and other resources sufficient to meet the ambitious schedule required for this study.

Scope of the Evaluation

The selected evaluating organization will design and conduct a preliminary evaluation of the HOPE II Program that involves one funded intermediary and the subgrantee faith-based and community-based organizations receiving services from that intermediary. The evaluation will provide the first independent assessment of the extent to which the goals and objectives of the HOPE II Program are being achieved. The intermediary will participate in a wide array of activities designed to increase skills and knowledge at the leadership and staff levels within faith-based and community-based organizations and to increase the management and service capacity of the organizations. Some desired outcomes of the subgrantee activities might include diversification of funding streams, improved management control and functioning, and the increased ability to reach and serve crime victims in need. The evaluation will attempt to assess the extent to which the HOPE II Program is contributing to these positive developments.

The evaluation is expected to address the following research questions:

- What type and quality of technical assistance are the faith-based and community-based organizations receiving from the intermediary?
- What are the results of technical assistance received at the faith-based and community-based organization level? If there are changes in organizational capacity, how do they have an impact on direct service delivery?
- How are subaward programs offered by the intermediary structured and in what ways do subawards increase faith-based and/or community-based organizational capacity or services? How effective is the practice of awarding the HOPE II Program subawards in increasing the organizational or service capacity of faith-based and community-based organizations?
- In what areas of organizational capacity improvement have intermediary services been most effective? What approaches and practices of the intermediary are associated with the greatest gains in service delivery and organizational capacity among faith-based and community-based organizations?
- In what areas of service delivery and organizational capacity have faith-based and community-based organizations shown the greatest improvement? Among the faith-based and community-based organizations served by the HOPE II Program intermediary, what characteristics are associated with the greatest achievements in service delivery, capacity building, and improvement?

NIJ seeks to assess the value added by the intermediaries sponsored by the HOPE II Program to their faith-based and community-based subgrantees in terms of service delivery and organizational capacity in defined areas such as the recruitment and use of volunteers, provision of services to victims (e.g., advocacy, transportation), promotion of outreach efforts, and assistance to victims obtaining victim compensation benefits. NIJ seeks to use the soundest methodological approaches to document outcomes and to assess net impacts, where possible. The number of faith-based and community-based organizations to be included in the study will be determined to some extent by the intermediary selected and by the recommendations of the applicant regarding sample sizes needed to assess impacts.

Challenges to the Evaluation

Program variation. The faith-based and/or community-based organizations receiving technical assistance and/or subawards from the intermediary participating in the HOPE II Program serve a variety of different populations and have different missions, goals, and methods of service provision. They vary in organizational size, structure, tenure in the field, types of staff, and other organizational dimensions. This variation may make it difficult to develop common measures, establish causality, or generalize findings.

Measuring organizational change. Organizational capacity is a relatively new term with fluid definitions that could make it challenging to develop reliable and quantifiable measures that can be used with multiple organizations.

Components of the Evaluation

The evaluation will have three phases:

- Phase I—Methodological Refinement and Baseline Data Collection.
- Phase II—Process Evaluation.
- Phase III—Outcome/Impact Evaluation.

The first two phases are to be completed in the first year of the project. The first phase of the evaluation is an important prerequisite to determine the changes that have occurred within the faith-based and community-based organizations. The second phase is critical to understanding the role of the intermediary in delivering funds and technical assistance (both service delivery and capacity building) to the faith-based and community-based organizations. At the end of the first year, an interim report should be delivered to NIJ and should include the following:

- Intermediary descriptors, including, but not limited to, staffing, funding, operating procedures, and technical assistance program objectives.
- Faith-based and community-based organization descriptors, including, but not limited to, the range of services provided, population served, staffing, and funding.
- Baseline measures of organizational capacity for all faith-based and community-based organizations in the study, including, but not limited to, staff training, awareness of funding sources, and effective use of volunteers.
- Baseline measures of service delivery for all faith-based and community-based organizations in the study, including, but not limited to, the number of victims served,

scope of services offered to victims, victim satisfaction with services, and referrals to faith-based and community-based organizations by other service providers.

- Process evaluation results.

The outcome/impact evaluation will be completed in the second year of the project. Short-term and long-term outcome measures (initially collected at baseline) should be identified and evaluated within a timeframe in which changes might be anticipated. A final report will be provided to NIJ at the end of the project period and will include a history of the project, description of the methodology, analysis of the data, results of the outcome/impact evaluation, and a conclusion about the role of the HOPE II Program intermediary in improving the organizational and service capacity of faith-based and community-based organizations. The grantee should also provide an executive summary of the report.

III. General Requirements and Guidance

NIJ is asking you to submit a proposal that states the problem under investigation (including goals and objectives of the proposed project) and the relevance of the project to public policy, practice, or theory. The program narrative section should state the research question and objectives and explain how the work will contribute to knowledge and practice. It should describe in sufficient detail the research methods and analytic strategy.

Your application should include these elements:

• Program Narrative

The Program Narrative includes:

- a. Abstract (not to exceed 400 words).
- b. Table of contents.
- c. Main body. Includes:
 - Purpose, goals, and objectives.
 - Review of relevant literature.
 - Research design and methods.
 - Implications for policy and practice.
 - Management plan and organization.
 - Dissemination strategy.
- d. Appendixes. (Not counted against solicitation page limit.) Includes:
 - 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**
- **Budget Narrative**
- **Negotiated Indirect Rate Agreement** (If applicable.)
- **Other Program Attachments**

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

Instructions for submitting proposals can be found in "Guidelines: How to Submit Applications," (available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm#gasya>) and the Office of Justice Programs Grants Management System Handbook (available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>).

- A. Submit applications online:** Paper applications are not accepted. Applications must be submitted through the Office of Justice Programs' online Grants Management System. NIJ suggests you begin the process early, especially if this is the first time you have used the system. To begin, go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>. There are three types of documents that can be uploaded to an application package: PDFs, Word documents, and text documents.
- B. Relevance of the project for policy and practice:** Higher quality proposals clearly explain the practical implications of the project. They connect technical expertise with 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.
- C. Equal opportunity for all applicants:** It is OJP's policy that faith-based and community organizations that statutorily qualify as eligible applicants under OJP programs are invited and encouraged to apply for awards. Faith-based and community organizations will be considered for an award on the same basis as any other eligible applicants and, if they receive an award, will be treated on an equal basis with non-faith-based and community organization grantees in the administration of such awards. No eligible applicant or grantee will be discriminated 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.

-
- D. 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 proposal 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.
- E. Number of grants to be awarded:** NIJ's grant award process is highly competitive. The number of awards NIJ makes is always subject to the availability of funds and the number and quality of applications received.
- F. When awards will be made:** All applicants, whether they are accepted or rejected, will be notified. The review and approval process takes about 6 months. You should not propose to begin work until at least 6 months after the proposal deadline on the cover of this solicitation. Also, you should not expect to receive notification of a decision for at least 6 months after that date. Lists of awards are updated regularly on NIJ's Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>.
- G. Financial audits are required:** If your organization spends \$500,000 or more of Federal funds during the fiscal year, you may be asked to submit an organization-wide financial and compliance audit report before any award is made. The audit must be performed in accordance with the U.S. Government Accountability Office Government Accounting Standards and must conform to Chapter 19 ("Audit Requirements") of the Office of Justice Programs' Financial Guide (available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/FinGuide>). You may include the costs of complying with these audits in the proposed budget submitted as part of your application. Detailed information regarding the independent audit is available in Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133 (available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars>).
- H. An environmental assessment may be required:** All award recipients must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). To ensure NEPA compliance, NIJ may require some award recipients to submit additional information.
- I. Protection of confidentiality:** Federal regulations require applicants for NIJ funding to outline specific procedures for protecting private information about individuals as part of the Privacy Certificate submitted with the application package. For additional information, see "Guidelines: How to Submit Applications," <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm#gsya>.
- J. 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. NIJ will use the DUNS number throughout the grant life cycle. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, one-time activity. Obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or by applying online at <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com>. Individuals are exempt from this requirement.

- K. Funds cannot be used to lobby:** Under the Anti-Lobbying Act (18 U.S.C. § 1913), grantees generally may not use funds to support the enactment, repeal, or modification of any law, regulation, or policy at any level of government. For additional information on rules and regulations, see “Guidelines: How to Submit Applications” at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm#gasya> and OJP’s Financial Guide at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/FinGuide>.
- L. What will *not* be funded:** Only evaluation of the grantees receiving funding under the HOPE II Program will be considered under this solicitation. NIJ will not review proposals to fund other research and evaluation projects. NIJ typically *does not* fund the provision of training or direct service.
- M. Cost of proposed work:** NIJ anticipates making a single award, the amount of which will depend on the quality of applications received and the funds available. Applicants should carefully consider the resources needed to undertake this program in the preparation of their budgets. The award period for this evaluation will be 2 years.

Funding will be awarded in two phases to allow initial support for methodology refinement, baseline data collection, and process evaluation. While a budget for the entire project should be proposed, applications should provide a breakdown of the budget for the two phases separately. Some costs in the second phase will be estimates; these can be adjusted when the revised budget, based on the known sites for the study, is submitted in the second year of the project. NIJ cannot guarantee that subsequent phases will be funded. Such additional funding depends on NIJ’s resources and the grantee’s satisfactory completion of each phase.

Call for assistance:

For technical guidance about using the Grants Management System, call the hotline at 1-888-549-9901. For questions about this solicitation, the research being solicited, or other NIJ funding opportunities, see the NIJ web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij> or contact NIJ at 202-307-2942.

IV. Selection Criteria

NIJ is firmly committed to the competitive process in awarding grants. All proposals are subjected to an independent peer-review panel evaluation. External peer-review panelists consider both technical and programmatic merits. Panelists are selected based on their expertise in subject areas pertinent to the proposals.

Peer-review panelists will evaluate proposals using the criteria listed below. NIJ staff then make recommendations to the NIJ Director. The Director makes final award decisions.

Successful applicants must demonstrate the following:

A. Understanding of the problem and its importance.

B. Quality and technical merit.

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).

C. Impact of the proposed project.

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).

D. Capabilities, demonstrated productivity, and experience of applicants.

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).

E. Budget.

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.

F. Dissemination strategy.

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.

V. Requirements for Successful Applicants

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

- A. Final report:** The final report should be a comprehensive overview of the project and should include 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 400 words and an executive summary of no more than 2,500 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 author 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 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.)

- B. Interim reports:** Grantees must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, and a final progress report. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent. Post-award reporting requirements are described in “Guidelines: How to Submit Applications,” available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm#gsya>.
- C. Materials concerning protection of confidential information and human subjects:** Recipients of NIJ research funds must comply with Federal regulations concerning the

protection of private information about individuals. Recipients also must comply with Federal regulations concerning protection of human subjects. In general, all research involving human subjects that is conducted or supported by NIJ funds must be reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board before Federal funds are expended for that research. NIJ may also ask grant recipients for additional information related to privacy and human subjects testing.

Information regarding NIJ's requirements for privacy and protection of human subjects appears in "Guidelines: How to Submit Applications," which is available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm#gsya>, and at NIJ's Human Subjects Protection web page, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/humansubjects>.

- D. Electronic data:** Some grant recipients will be required to submit electronic data and supporting documentation, such as a codebook or dictionary, capable of being re-analyzed and used by other researchers. The materials must be submitted by the end date of the grant. Grant applicants should ensure that the proposed timeline and budget accommodate these requirements.

- E. Performance guidelines:** As part of government-wide efforts to measure the performance of Federal funding, in May 2002, the White House issued guidance on how to evaluate the performance of Federal research programs. Research should be: (1) relevant—that is, important and appropriate for meeting the needs of the field, (2) of high quality, and (3) well-managed by grantees and well-monitored by the Federal agency. Therefore, in addition to the reporting requirements discussed above, a grantee's performance on an award made under this solicitation will be evaluated on whether the final research report was (1) relevant 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; (2) of high quality as assessed by peer reviewers; and (3) well-managed as measured by whether significant interim project milestones were achieved, final deadlines were met, and costs remained within approved limits. For more information see "Guidelines: How to Submit Applications," available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm#gsya>.

Tips for Submitting Your Application

1. Begin the application process early—especially if you have never used the online Grants Management System before. NIJ will not accept applications received after the closing date and time listed on the cover. To start the process, go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>.
2. Review “Guidelines: How to Submit Applications” for complete instructions, available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm#gasya>.
3. Although your proposal may budget for the purchase of equipment if the equipment is necessary to conduct the project, NIJ will not fund applications that are primarily to purchase equipment, materials, or supplies.
4. Call for help:
 - For technical guidance about the Grants Management System, call the hotline at 1–888–549–9901.

For questions about this solicitation, the research being solicited, or other NIJ funding opportunities, contact NIJ at 202–305–7807 or visit NIJ’s Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>.

View or print a copy of this document from the NIJ Web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>) or request one by calling NCJRS at 1–800–851–3420 or e-mailing askncjrs@ncjrs.org.

The National Institute of Justice is the research, development, and evaluation agency of the U.S. Department of Justice.

NIJ provides objective, independent, evidence-based knowledge and tools to enhance the administration of justice and public safety.

NIJ is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime.