



NOV. 05

**NIJ**

Solicitation for Proposals

**Research and Evaluation in Community Corrections: A Multijurisdictional Study of Reduced Caseload and Related Case Supervision Strategies in Managing Medium- and High-Risk Offenders**

**Notice:**

**You *must* submit your application electronically using Grants.gov.**

Go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding/howto.htm> for application instructions. For Grants.gov technical support, call 1-800-518-4726.

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 16.560  
**CFDA Title:** National Institute of Justice Research, Evaluation, and Development Project Grants

**Deadline:**

**February 9, 2006**

**8 p.m. eastern time**

**Grants.gov Funding No.  
2006-NIJ-1165**

**SL 000737**

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
**Office of Justice Programs**  
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# Research and Evaluation in Community Corrections: A Multijurisdictional Study of Reduced Caseload and Related Case Supervision Strategies in Managing Medium- and High-Risk Offenders

## 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 (OJP). 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.

More offenders are sentenced to probation than to any other sanction. Currently, nearly twice as many people are on probation in the United States as there are in jails and prisons combined. Despite the widespread use of probation, many basic questions remain about its effectiveness in reducing recidivism and enhancing community safety. With increases in the number of probationers and in the severity of probation offenses—often with no corresponding increase in resources—two of the most basic questions to be addressed concern the effects of caseload management and supervision strategies on probation outcome. With this solicitation, NIJ seeks proposals that focus primarily on the effect of reduced caseloads in the management of medium- to high-risk offenders in a general probation population.

**Due date:** The due date is **February 9, 2006**. 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.

**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 apply:** Detailed instructions for using Grants.gov to apply are available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding/howto.htm>. For Grants.gov technical support, call 1-800-518-4726.

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## II. Proposal Topics

The volume and type of offenders under supervision in the community vary considerably from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Pretrial, probation, and parole agencies vary considerably as well. For example, some agencies serve juvenile, misdemeanor, and felony offenders, while others supervise only one type of offender. All agencies have a common interest in understanding which case management and supervision strategies are most effective in reducing recidivism and promoting public safety.

Of key interest are the effects of caseload size on outcome when supervising medium- and high-risk offenders in a general probation population. Also of interest are related issues of supervision, such as the quantity versus quality of contacts, linkages between levels and length of supervision and outcome measures, the relationship between staff orientations and attitudes and outcome measures, and the effects of swift and certain sanctions and rewards in enforcing probation rules and conditions. Another important topic is how any of these strategies can be enhanced through the use of innovative technologies.

NIJ anticipates funding one multijurisdictional project. Although the study sites will be determined after the grant is awarded and in consultation with NIJ and its Federal partners, the proposal should identify potential candidate jurisdictions that follow evidence-based practices and where, at a minimum, reduced caseload size can be studied. Site selection should focus primarily on probation agencies that have demonstrated a commitment to evidence-based policies and practices. A minimum of three sites will be necessary to achieve the goals of the study. Successful applicants must demonstrate how the proposed research will advance knowledge, practice, and policy on the management and supervision of medium- to high-risk offenders in a general supervised probation population.

Because this solicitation is interested in **impact evaluations**, there is a strong preference for randomly selected control groups. However, consideration will be given to rigorous quasi-experimental designs and proposals that include equivalent comparison groups, dosage trials, alternative intervention groups, delayed wait control groups, or an interrupted time series design. Outcome variables should include measures of re-offending such as new arrests, convictions, or commitments, as well as revocations, administrative warnings and sanctions, and drug and alcohol tests. A cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness analysis should also be included as a part of any proposed project.

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The proposed research project will involve three tasks to be performed by the grantee in close collaboration with NIJ and its Federal partners:

1. Finalize a full research design, including protocols for data collection, final site selection, time lines, and detailed plans for the execution of the project.
2. Conduct the actual research effort.
3. Analyze the data, prepare a number of written reports and suitable presentations to disseminate the results to a variety of audiences, including probation authorities at all levels both at the selected sites and nationally, policymakers and practitioners, and the research community.

Proposals should include a discussion of, and timelines for, the following milestones:

- Finalize a full research design in consultation with NIJ and its Federal partners.
- Finalize the site selection plan and recruit sites.
- Create protocols to collect data and develop timelines for data collection.
- Develop protocols for managing the research data.
- Develop a plan for analyzing all quantitative and qualitative data in consultation with NIJ and its Federal partners.
- Develop a detailed plan for reports and dissemination activities.
- Prepare reports and presentation materials and submit them for review by NIJ.
- Prepare written reports for dissemination and for presentations.
- Prepare a final technical report for NIJ.

Applicants for this project must have a strong record of successful applied research in community corrections and a demonstrated capacity to work effectively with State and local community corrections agencies, as evidenced by past consultative and collaborative efforts. Applicants must have the organizational capacity to carry out a multisite research project, to collect and appropriately analyze the wide range of data such a study will produce, and to effectively disseminate the results of the study to different audiences through a variety of approaches.

### **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

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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, which 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) 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**

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

• **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>.

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- A. Submit applications online:** Paper applications are not accepted. Applications must be submitted online at Grants.gov. See <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding/howto.htm> for application instructions.
- 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. 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.
- D. 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.
- E. 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>.
- F. Financial capability questionnaire:** Any applicant that is a nongovernmental entity and has not previously received an award from OJP will be required to complete and submit a financial capability questionnaire before any award is made.
- G. An environmental assessment may be required:** All awards are subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). To ensure NEPA compliance, NIJ may require some award recipients to submit additional information.
- H. Protection of confidentiality:** Federal regulations require applicants for NIJ funding to outline specific procedures for protecting private information about individuals as part of the

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Privacy Certificate submitted with the application package. For additional information, see the chapter on confidentiality of information in “Guidelines: How to Submit Applications,” <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm#gasya>.

- I. 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.
- J. 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 OJP’s Financial Guide at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/FinGuide>.
- K. 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, but NIJ does not fund proposals that are primarily to purchase equipment.)
  3. Proposals that do not include an experimental or strong quasi-experimental design with appropriately selected comparison groups.
  4. Proposals that focus on low-risk offenders or only special probation populations, such as reentering offenders, sex offenders, juveniles, or offenders with mental illnesses.
  5. Work that will be funded under another specific solicitation.
- L. Cost of proposed work:** NIJ anticipates that up to \$1 million (including all direct and indirect costs) may be available for awards under this solicitation. NIJ anticipates making a single award, but multiple awards may be made in order to achieve the goals of the project. If multiple awards are made, grantees will be required to adopt common methods, research strategies, data analysis, and research products. All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds. If you propose a project that exceeds the amount of money that may be available for this solicitation, we recommend that you divide the project into phases, stages, or tasks so that NIJ can consider making an award for a specific portion of the work. NIJ cannot guarantee that subsequent phases, stages, or tasks will be funded. Such additional



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funding depends on NIJ's resources and your satisfactory completion of each phase, stage, or task. Note: Deliverables (e.g., a final report) will be required at the end of each phase, stage, or task.

- M. Information technology standards compliance:** As appropriate, all equipment and software developed under awards that result from this solicitation must be compliant with U.S. Department of Justice Information Technology interface standards, including the National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan (see [http://it.ojp.gov/documents/National\\_Criminal\\_Intelligence\\_Sharing\\_Plan.pdf](http://it.ojp.gov/documents/National_Criminal_Intelligence_Sharing_Plan.pdf)), Global Justice XML Data Model (see <http://it.ojp.gov/jxdm/>), and the Law Enforcement Information Sharing Plan (LEISP). A list of additional standards can be found at the OJP Standards Clearinghouse (<http://it.ojp.gov/jsr/intro/intro03.html>).
- N. Funding to faith-based and community organizations:** Consistent with President George W. Bush's Executive Order 13279, dated December 12, 2002, and 28 C.F.R. Part 38, it is OJP policy that faith-based and community organizations that statutorily qualify as eligible applicants under OJP programs are invited and encouraged to apply for assistance awards to fund eligible grant activities. Faith-based and community organizations will be considered on the same basis as any other eligible applicants and, if they receive an award, 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 OJP awards retain their independence and do not lose or have to modify their religious identity (e.g., removing religious symbols) to receive awards. OJP 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 OJP grant funds; religious activity must be separate in time or place from the OJP-funded program. Further, participation in such activity by individuals receiving services must be voluntary. Programs funded by OJP are not permitted to discriminate in the provision of services on the basis of a beneficiary's religion.
- O. Call for assistance:**  
For technical guidance about applying through Grants.gov, call Grants.gov Technical Support at 1-800-518-4726. 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 202-305-7807.

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## IV. Selection Criteria

NIJ is firmly committed to the competitive process in awarding grants. All proposals are subjected to independent peer-review panel evaluations. 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.

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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 substantive 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 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 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, 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. 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 information about individuals or non-governmental entities. Recipients also must comply with Federal regulations concerning protection of human subjects or identifiable private information. In general, all research involving human subjects or identifiable private information 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 confidentiality and human subjects.

Information regarding NIJ's requirements for confidentiality and protection of human subjects appears in the chapter on human subjects protection in "Guidelines: How to Submit Applications," at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm#gsva>, and at NIJ's Human Subjects Protection Web page, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding/humansubjects/index.html>.

**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 Measures:** To assist OJP in fulfilling its responsibilities under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), P.L. 103-62, applicants who receive funding under this solicitation must provide data that measures the results of their work. This data will also contribute to achieving NIJ's overall research, development, and evaluation mission. NIJ expects research to be accurate, objective, relevant, and useful. Performance measures for this solicitation are as follows:

Objective	Performance Measures	Data Grantee Provides
Develop and analyze information and data having clear implications for criminal justice policy and practice.	<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></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></ol>

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### **Tips for Submitting Your Application**

1. Begin the application process early—especially if you have never used Grants.gov. NIJ will not accept applications received after the deadline listed on the cover. To start the process, go to <http://www.grants.gov>.
2. Go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding/howto.htm> for detailed application instructions.
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 Grants.gov, call 1–800–518–4726.
  - 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](mailto:askncjrs@ncjrs.org).

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The National Institute of Justice is the research, development, and evaluation agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. NIJ's mission is to advance scientific research, development, and evaluation 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.