

## Questions and Answers

### Methodological Research to Support the National Crime Victimization Survey: Self-Report Data on Rape and Sexual Assault - Pilot Test Solicitation

- 1. Q. What is the anticipated award date?**

**A.** The award will be made by the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2011.
  
- 2. Q. Should offerors plan to conduct interviews for both the optimal and comparison designs in English and Spanish, or English only?**

**A.** Potential applicants should plan to conduct interviews in English and Spanish.
  
- 3. Q. Page 9 of the Solicitation notes that Task 10 falls within Phase III and therefore should be completed by month 23 of the project. Yet, page 19 indicates that Task 10 falls within Phase IV - Post Data Collection. Could the government please clarify with which phase Task 10 is associated and by what month Task 10 should be complete on the overall timetable?**

**A.** There is an error on Page 9. Task 10 - Data Processing Procedure should be listed under Phase IV - Post Data Collection, not Phase III - Pilot Data Collection. Accordingly, work on Task 10 is expected to be complete by 28 months.
  
- 4. Q. Since 2008 the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has initiated a number of projects to assess and improve the methodology of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). Has any of that research, either completed or underway, been used to inform Methodological Research to Support the NCVS: Self-Report Data on Rape and Sexual Assault – Pilot Test solicitation?**

**A.** There are no projects underway that informed the development of the current solicitation. One of the projects currently underway examines mixed modes, specifically the use of Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR). As a part of that research, police records are being used to seed the sample, but this is not the focus of the study. Additionally, no violent crimes are being examined in that research.
  
- 5. Q. Can the offeror provide suggestions for improving design of the research?**

**A.** The applicant may add additional information on how they would incorporate methodological improvements to the parameters outlined in the solicitation, under three conditions. Firstly, the submitted proposal must remain responsive to all elements of the original solicitation. Secondly, any additional information or material must be contained

within the parameters indicated on page 35 of the solicitation, Application Checklist; the Program Narrative must not exceed 75 double spaced pages, and must have an 11 point font and 1 inch margins. Lastly, the expected award amount remains between \$10-12 million, as stated on page 35.

6. **Q. Should the recipient plan to pay incentives to respondents who participate in the in-person and random-digit dialing (RDD) samples?** Using incentives would clearly increase participation rates, but the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) does not use incentives currently. Therefore, not using incentives with the participants in this study would maximize comparability with the existing NCVS methodology. We assume that the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) does not intend to pay incentives to participants in any redesigned NCVS for cost reasons, so not using incentives in this study would also maximize comparability with procedures likely to be used in the future. Paying a \$10 incentive to the 20,000 interview participants in this project would cost \$200,000. For these reasons, we think that BJS would favor the grantee not using incentives, but we would appreciate some guidance from BJS on this issue.

A. Applicants may discuss alternative design components in their proposals and the rationale for including these components, such as incentives, into the optimal and comparison designs. Several of the ongoing NCVS methodological research projects do incorporate incentives as a method of increasing participation rates; however, BJS views the use of incentives in these studies as a tertiary aspect of the research. The NCVS does not currently use incentives, and BJS is not considering the use of incentives in the future.

7. **Q. Will BJS require the recipient to measure exposure to other types of crimes currently measured in the NCVS in the optimum and comparison designs, or should the 20,000 interviews focus primarily on rape and other sexual assaults?** As stated in paragraph 3 on page 5 of the solicitation, the primary focus of the solicitation is for “applicants to create and test two different designs for collecting self-report data on rape and sexual assault.” The answer to this question has significant cost implications.

A. No. The purpose of this research is the development and comparison of methods to measure the crimes of rape and sexual assault.

8. **Q. Should the recipient assume that the rape and sexual assault screening questions will be identical or very similar across the two design conditions or should we assume that they are likely to differ?** The solicitation requires the recipient to test two designs for measuring rape and sexual assault: 1) the optimum design to be identified by the CNSTAT panel and 2) a design very similar to the one used by our research group. The first design is described as involving an in-person sampling and interview method whereas the second design will use a RDD sampling and telephone interview method. If there is a considerable difference between the two sets of sexual assault and rape questions, it will be difficult to interpret any potential

differences in rape and sexual assault prevalence between the two designs because of the confound in screening questions, i.e., are differences due to sampling and data collection methods or due to differences in the performance of the screening questions?

**A.** Given the potential differences between the optimal and comparison designs, applicants should creatively explore a broad range of methods in assessing the relative data quality between the designs. This aspect of the proposal is extremely important, and though BJS provides possible examples on page 7 of the solicitation, applicants are strongly encouraged to think creatively in the discussion of methods they will use in the evaluation of data quality. BJS can provide no guidance as to the final methods that will be recommended by the independent CNSTAT review, including the format of the screening questions.

**9. Q. Will the recipient be expected to play any role in suggesting potential stakeholders to BJS?**

**A.** Yes.

**10. Q. Will the recipient be responsible for any costs associated with these meetings other than their own travel costs?** The solicitation states that the grantee should be prepared to participate in stakeholder meetings that will be organized by BJS. However it is unclear what involvement and financial responsibility the grantee will have in the development and conduct of these meetings.

**A.** Yes. The stakeholder meetings are considered an aspect of the developmental phase of the research, and the cost for these meetings has been factored into the amount of the award.

**11. Q. What is the anticipated start date for the project?** The solicitation does not provide one. If BJS does not have a start date in mind, what would be the most plausible date to use as an assumption? The start date has implications for the budget, since annual raises are tied to fiscal years and factored into labor rates.

**A.** The award will be made by September 30, 2011. BJS will work expeditiously to insure that the start date of the award is October 1, 2011. This date may vary based on the thoroughness of the successful applicant's documentation and the speed with which the successful applicant is able to respond to OCFO requests for additional clarification materials. No work may begin on the project until the final approval is received from OCFO.

**12. Q. Is a smaller font size acceptable for tables, charts, and graphics?** The solicitation stipulates double-spaced with 11-point standard font for the project narrative. Is it acceptable to use single spacing and a smaller font size for tables, charts, and

graphics?

A. Single spacing may be used in tables, but the font must remain 11-point.

**13. Q. What is the number of NCVS interviewed females age 18 and older in the five MSAs?**

A. In 2010, interviews were conducted with approximately 11,000 females age 18 and older in the five MSAs.

**14. Q. The solicitation references the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVSS) currently being conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as one of the existing approaches that should be reviewed by applicants. Where can I find information about NISVSS?**

A. The CDC, which is not associated with or a co-sponsor of this solicitation, has provided the following information concerning the NISVSS program: A great deal of information is available from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) website with regard to this ongoing data collection activity. The first year of data collection for this system was 2010, so nothing has yet been published in the peer reviewed literature regarding the methods used or findings from the survey. CDC anticipates publication of an initial report on the findings and methods for 2010 in October 2011. Specifics on this information collection can be found as outlined below.

The following is a link to the main OMB page for the NISVSS Information Collection:  
<http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAOMBHistory?ombControlNumber=0920-0822>

The following is a link to the OMB package that includes the protocol and methods:  
[http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAViewDocument?ref\\_nbr=200906-0920-020](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAViewDocument?ref_nbr=200906-0920-020)

The following is a link to the page where you can view the information collection; that is, the NISVSS survey instrument. Click on the link for *(NISVSS) Att C (Survey) draft 060609.doc* that appears in the grey box in the middle of the page in the column entitled "Instrument File." The sexual violence section and related follow-up questions appear on pages 34-40.

[http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAViewIC?ref\\_nbr=200906-0920-020&icID=189766](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAViewIC?ref_nbr=200906-0920-020&icID=189766)

**15. Q. Follow-up to question 10: Should the grantee budget cover cost of meeting room rental, food, and participant expenses (e.g., airfare, hotel, honorarium), etc.?**

A. BJS will be responsible for funding participant travel and logistical costs (i.e., room rental, etc.) of stakeholder meetings referenced in the solicitation. The recipient will be responsible for travel costs associated with attending the stakeholder meetings and other meetings cited in the solicitation.

**16. Q. May appendices not specifically mentioned in the solicitation be included as attachments?**

**A.** Yes. Submissions may include appendices not specifically mentioned in the solicitation. However, appendices should not be used to exceed the prescribed maximum length of the program narrative. Activities specified by the solicitation to be included in the program narrative should not be presented in an appendix.

**17. Q. Page 19 of the solicitation states, “Complete additional interviews of known rape and sexual assault victims seeded in each sample.” As these interviews will be in addition to the 20,000 completed interviews for the general population sample, for budgeting purposes, how many seeded sample interviews should be completed?**

**A.** Task 2c of the solicitation discusses the development of the seeding protocols. The purpose of seeding is to obtain a sufficient number of cases to enable comparisons across methodologies. Part of this work is identifying the number of seeded cases required, in addition to those expected from the RDD sample, to conduct such analyses.