



Decoding Federal Solicitations

PARTNERSHIPS THAT WORK SERIES

SESSION 1

AUGUST 10, 2017

Welcome to *Partnerships that Work*

NLADA is excited to welcome you to the launch of Partnerships that Work, a five-part webinar series, helping civil and defender stakeholders to better understand the ins and outs of connecting their programs to federal resources.

The Partnerships That Work series is presented jointly by NLADA's Defender and Civil Legal Services Divisions as a collaborative effort to connect stakeholders across the civil and criminal justice landscapes to resources, partners, and to spark innovation. You can learn more and register for any of the sessions on our website at <http://www.nlada.org/webinars>.

Decoding Federal Solicitations

Federal funding solicitations are long and.... Confusing.

We have some suggestions to help you wade through the pages more effectively.

Before you get started, look for the solicitation mission and deadline.

- How does the issuing agency expect this opportunity to help fulfill its mission? Does the work of your office or organization support that same mission already?
- When are applications due? Do you have time to put in a strong application before the deadline?

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U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Assistance



The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) is seeking applications under the Effective Administration of Criminal Justice Act of 2016 for national partners to provide training and technical assistance to state and local governments to provide the protections in criminal justice processes established by the Sixth Amendment of the Constitution. This program furthers the Department's mission by ensuring the fair administration of justice through meeting the obligations established by the Sixth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

FY2017 BJA National Initiatives – Adjudications: Training and Technical Assistance to Support the Protection of Constitutional Rights Under the Sixth Amendment

Applications Due: May 16, 2017

Eligibility

For information on eligibility, see [Section C. Eligibility Information](#).

Deadline

Applicants must register with [Grants.gov](#) prior to submitting an application. All applications are due by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on May 16, 2017.

To be considered timely, an application must be submitted by the application deadline using Grants.gov, and the applicant must have received a validation message from Grants.gov that indicates successful and timely submission. OJP urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the application due date, in order to allow time for the applicant to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

OJP encourages all applicants to read this [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#).

For additional information, see [How to Apply](#) in Section D. Application and Submission Information.

Decoding Federal Solicitations

Getting Started: Use your time effectively by knowing where to look first to see if the solicitation might be a good fit.

- Goals
- Deliverables
- Eligibility
 - Partnership Potential
 - Reporting Expectations
- Application Checklist

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Do any of the goals of the solicitation align with your office or organizations goals? Are you doing any similar work already or have you done so in the past?

As you're reading, keep an eye out for things you'll want to work into your program proposal.

- Strategic Planning Services – have you participated in or facilitated a strategic planning process before?
- Data and Research – how are you currently using data or research to make decisions that increase your organizations capacity?
- Create a Platform – are there innovative ways that your organization uses technology to share information?

Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables

The overall goal of the Training and Technical Assistance to Support the Protection of Constitutional Rights Under the Sixth Amendment Program is to assist state and local government, and court, judicial, and defense leaders in strategic planning processes that support assessment, adoption, and implementation of improved program practices to enhance the protections of the Sixth Amendment in criminal prosecutions. BJA envisions a collaborative model of cooperating partners to assist jurisdictions with building and maximizing capacity; adopting and implementing practices; identifying and explaining chronic challenges and emerging issues; and working with a research partner to ensure strong data-driven, research-based approaches, and robust collection and reporting on performance measures, specifically:

Category (1): The goal of the **Sixth Amendment Strategic Planning Initiative** is to deliver strategic planning services to state and local governments, including their agents such as court leaders and administrators and defender systems, to use data and research to enhance their capacity and assist with efforts to assess, target, and sustain the most critical and effective criminal justice services around upholding the Sixth Amendment rights, including effective public defense services.

Category (2): The goal of the **Right to Counsel and Enhancing Defense Training and Technical Assistance Initiative** is to assist and build capacity of state and local governments, including their agents such as defender systems, to support the adoption and implementation of targeted strategies to enhance the Sixth Amendment Right to Counsel as well as create a platform to disseminate materials and practices around securing Sixth Amendment Rights.

Category (3): The goal of the **Sixth Amendment Fellowship** is to work with BJA to engage the field in assessing areas of needs and addressing gaps in services to support the goals of the Effective Administration of Criminal Justice Act of 2016.

Category 1: Sixth Amendment Strategic Planning Initiative. Competition ID: BJA-2017-112384

BJA is seeking a provider to develop and implement the Sixth Amendment Strategic Planning Initiative, delivering strategic planning services to state and local governments, including their agents such as court leaders and administrators and defender systems, to use data and research to enhance stakeholder capacity and assist with efforts to assess, target, and sustain the most critical and effective criminal justice services that will ensure Sixth Amendment rights, including effective public defense services. As part of this approach, the provider should be able to deploy research assistance to support action research components in the planning process, including using data to define the issue(s) and assessing need; identifying the research and evidence base of proven approaches; supporting testing of innovative approaches; building capacity to adopt, implement, and sustain effective approaches; and periodically assess implementation and success. The provider may also work with different state agencies, such as the Administrative Office of the Courts, to identify sites and develop a collaborative infrastructure to develop and implement efforts that can build upon existing systems' infrastructure and capacity, and identify and test innovative approaches.

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Your program proposal will need to show how you intend to execute every listed deliverable or requirement.

Once again, keep an eye out for things you'll want to work into your proposal. Deliverables are also where you may get your first idea of what partnerships will be useful.

- Manage an Online Process – Is there someone on your team or a team you've been wanting to work with that can do this well?
- Deploy Research Partners – Are you currently conducting research? Do you have the ability to leverage existing researcher partnerships?
- Develop Strategic Planning Tools – Creating tools combines a variety of skills from content to design to marketing and evaluation. Where will you find all of the skills needed to do this well?

The BJA-awarded provider, through partnership with researchers, must collect core information that relates to the jurisdictions, which supports the key aspects of enhanced provision of Sixth Amendment protections, including speedy trial, jury and witness management, and assignment of counsel. This should include proven practices implemented at the state and local levels along with costs associated with these efforts. Additionally, the provider must collect information on the extent and manner to which entities are incorporating evidence-based practices into their programs at the state and/or local levels.

Category 1 Deliverables and Requirements:

With guidance from BJA, the awardee will develop and manage a national level strategic planning function to support state and local governments in enforcing the obligations of the Sixth Amendment, including:

- Develop and manage an online process for state and local governments to seek strategic planning services.
- Develop and provide intensive strategic planning services to at least seven jurisdictions. This includes ongoing coaching to support adoption and implementation.
- Deploy research partners to support action research models that assess the planning process through use of data and research and evaluate the planning results.
- Develop strategic planning tools, including those based on research and data, to support a structured planning process that can be translated to different jurisdictions, but customized to reflect state and local needs. This planning would be specifically based on overall capacity to comply with all or a set of the obligations under the Sixth Amendment.
- Ensure any materials and curriculum developed reflect the latest research findings, including what is learned from the awardee's research partners, and all resources and training sessions are available for download or online streaming.
- Collect and analyze information on key Sixth Amendment issues to support the TTA being provided, including case management for speedy public trial, assignment of counsel, systems needs, and costs and funding provided to state and local entities for defender systems.
- Provide relevant, objective, and timely up-to-date, fact-based information to BJA by state and local entities with the responsibility for administering justice on policy and practice in the area of defender systems and the Sixth Amendment, including major state policy efforts or innovative practices.
- Meet and collaborate with BJA and others to enhance resources and knowledge, and leverage the respective expertise of partners in responding to the needs of the field. Upon BJA's recommendation and approval, the TTA provider will meet with or coordinate with other BJA programs, federal agencies, and TTA providers in an effort to collaborate and coordinate services and technical support across offices and departments.
- The applicant must work with researchers to use evidence-based strategies, collect data, and assess needs in order to provide fidelity to strategic plans for improving the administration of the criminal justice system. It must also leverage subject matter experts able to address the range of issues related to the obligations of the Sixth Amendment.
- The applicant should have demonstrated expertise in delivering and managing strategic planning services and TTA on a national level and have particular

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Once you've decided that the mission, timeline, goals, and deliverables of a solicitation are all in alignment with your organization you can review the eligibility section.

Though public defenders are not often mentioned explicitly in this section, they are rarely specifically precluded. This section will also issue guidance on demonstrated experience required to make an applicant eligible for award.

- Demonstrated expertise in delivering and managing strategic planning services on a NATIONAL LEVEL TTA program
- Demonstrated past experience in working with state and or local public defense systems

C. Eligibility Information

Categories 1 and 2: Eligible applicants are public or private organizations, nonprofit organizations (including tribal nonprofit and for-profit organizations), for-profit organizations, and public universities and colleges (including tribal institutions of higher education). For-profit organizations (as well as other recipients) must forgo any profit or management fee. Eligible

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nonprofit organizations must be exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and have a 501(c)(3) designation.

The applicant should have demonstrated expertise in delivering and managing strategic planning services on a national level TTA program and have particular knowledge of courts management and leadership and defender systems related to protecting the Sixth Amendment rights. In particular, the applicant must have demonstrated past experience in working with state and or local public defense systems and courts and an understanding of their operation, organizational structure, culture, and environment.

BJA welcomes applications under which two or more entities would carry out the federal award; however, only one entity may be the applicant. Any others must be proposed as subrecipients ("subgrantees").⁷ The applicant must be the entity that would have primary responsibility for carrying out the award, including administering the funding and managing the entire program. Under this solicitation, only one application by any particular applicant entity will be considered. An entity may, however, be proposed as a subrecipient ("subgrantee") in more than one application.

Category 3: Eligible applicants are limited to individuals, as well as state, tribal, or local government, organizations, or academic institutions seeking to provide federal-level experience for one of its staff members.

Organizations seeking to place their employee as a fellow under this program will not have programmatic oversight of the staff person for those activities conducted as part of the fellowship. For-profit organizations (as well as other recipients) must forgo any profit or management fee. Any person serving in the fellowship position must be a U.S. citizen at the time of application.

The prospective fellow should have all of the expertise needed to conduct the proposed activities in the fellowship, including at least 5 years of criminal justice expertise in Sixth Amendment issues, practice, or research and working in a policy or applied criminal justice setting (such as criminal justice, law enforcement, criminal courts, prosecutor, corrections, or partner agency such as a social service provider) or an agency or office with responsibility for criminal justice and public policy (such as a governor's office, mayor's office, or other important policy setting pertinent to criminal justice). Researchers should apply only if they have expertise and specific skills in developing models and applied research tools for the field, implementation of evidence-based practices, and collection and analysis of data and performance management.

Decoding Federal Solicitations

For many awardees, the greatest challenge in managing federal grants comes after award. Many grants are intended to assist their issuing agency in gathering data and evidence to guide policy.

Before deciding to submit an application, be thoughtful about what resources you have or will need in order to successfully report on each objective.

- Are you currently performing any similar work? If so, start tracking now as a troubleshooting period. Work that plan into your proposal.
- If you're not able to track one or more objectives internally, who can you partner with to fill that gap?

- b. Project Design and Implementation
- c. Capabilities and Competencies
- d. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures. BJA does not require applicants to submit performance measures data with their applications. Performance measures are included as an alert that BJA will require successful applicants to submit specific data as part of their reporting requirements. For the application, applicants should indicate an understanding of these requirements and discuss how they will gather the required data, should they receive funding.

OJP will require each successful applicant to submit specific performance measures data as part of its reporting under the award (see ["General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements"](#) in [Section F, Federal Award Administration Information](#)). The performance measures correlate to the goals, objectives, and deliverables identified under "Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables" in [Section A, Program Description](#).

The application should describe the applicant's plan for collection of all of the performance measures data listed in the table below under "Data Recipient Provides," should it receive funding.

Post award, recipients will be required to submit performance metric data semi-annually through BJA's online Training and Technical Assistance Reporting Portal. More information on reporting requirements can be found at: <https://www.bjatrainng.org/working-with-nttac/providers>.

| Objectives | Catalog ID | Performance Measure | Data Recipient Provides |
|--|------------|--|---|
| Objective 1: Support the development and implementation of effective policies and practices that advance securing Sixth Amendment rights and advance public defense reforms | 458 | Number of Trainings conducted | Number of trainings (by type): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In-person,• Web-based,• CD/DVD,• Peer to Peer,• Workshop |
| | 228 | Number of participants who attend the training | Number of individuals who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend the training (in-person) or started the training (web-based); |
| | 239 | Percentage of participants who successfully completed the training | |

Decoding Federal Solicitations

Once you think you've prepared all the parts of your application, review the application checklist at least twice more. There are a lot of parts in every application and missing one could disqualify you. Don't let all your hard work be wasted.

Save your work! Even if you're unsuccessful in your application on the first try there will be future solicitations or renewals of the solicitation at hand where sections can be recycled.

Application Checklist

FY2017 BJA National Initiatives – Adjudications: Training and Technical Assistance to Support the Protection of Constitutional Rights Under the Sixth Amendment

This application checklist has been created as an aid in developing an application.

What an Applicant Should Do:

Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:

- ___ Acquire a DUNS Number (see page 33)
- ___ Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see page 34)

To Register with Grants.gov:

- ___ Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see page 34)
- ___ Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see page 34)

To Find Funding Opportunity:

- ___ Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov (see page 34)
- ___ Select the correct Competition ID (see page 34)
- ___ Download Funding Opportunity and Application Package (see page 34)
- ___ Sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) (optional) (see page 32)
- ___ Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)
- ___ Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at oip.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm (see page 16)

After Application Submission, Receive Grants.gov Email Notifications That:

- ___ (1) application has been received,
- ___ (2) application has either been successfully validated or rejected with errors (see page 35)

If No Grants.gov Receipt, and Validation or Error Notifications are Received:

- ___ Contact the NCJRS Response Center regarding experiencing technical difficulties (see page 2)

Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements:

- ___ Review the "[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2017 Awards](#)" in the OJP Funding Resource Center.

Scope Requirement:

- ___ The federal amount requested is within the allowable limits of \$1 million for Category 1, \$1.5 million for Category 2, and \$3.5 million for Category 3.

Eligibility Requirement: See Section C. Eligibility

What an Application Should Include:

- ___ Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) (see page 18)
- ___ Intergovernmental Review (see page 18)
- ___ Project Abstract (see page 18)
- ___ Program Narrative (see page 19)
- ___ Budget Detail Worksheet (see page 24)
- ___ Budget Narrative (see page 25)
- ___ Timeline/Task Plan
- ___ Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see page 26)
- ___ Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see page 27)
- ___ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) (see page 27)
- ___ Additional Attachments
 - ___ Project Timeline, Résumés, and Letters of Support
 - ___ Work Product Examples
 - ___ Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications (see page 28)
 - ___ Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see page 29)
 - ___ Disclosure of Process related to Executive Compensation (see page 31)
- ___ Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable) (see page 15)

Learning from Experience

How one organization reviewed a solicitation and made their decision to apply (or not!)

- What were the **application** requirements?
- What were the **program** requirements?
 - Is this work we're currently doing? Is it work that we've been wanting to start?
- Is the work sustainable for us?
- What are the administrative requirements?

Guidance from the Field

- Have you had direct experience applying for a federal grant?
- In what ways is your office set up to support grant applications?
- How can NLADA help the help you to feel more prepared for this process?
- What types of funding partnerships would you like to learn more about?

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