

National Center for Building Community Trust and Justice
Frequently Asked Questions
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NARRATIVE PAGE LENGTH CLARIFIED

The Narrative portion of the application may be up to 30 double-spaced pages using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman is preferred) with 1-inch margins. See page 26 of the solicitation for the corrected text.

Citations / references may be part of the Program Narrative file (after the 30 or fewer pages of substantive text) or they may be uploaded as a separate file.

Q1: Where can I get more information about the requirements of the Department of Justice grant program National Center for Building Community Trust and Justice?

The solicitation describing the application requirements is published at:
<http://www.oijdp.gov/grants/solicitations/FY2014/NCBCTJ.pdf>.

Q2: What is the purpose of this program?

The purpose of the National Center for Building Community Trust and Justice is to explore, advance, assess, and disseminate information about strategies intended to enhance procedural justice, reduce implicit bias, and support racial reconciliation in communities of color. The intent of this initiative is to build on initial work in the above areas by considering, testing, and refining strategies to expand theories about procedural justice, bias reduction, and racial reconciliation throughout the criminal justice system.

Q3: Who may apply under this program?

Eligible applicants are limited to national, regional, state, or local public and private entities, including non-profit organizations (including tribal nonprofit organizations), faith-based and community organizations, institutions of higher education (including tribal institutions of higher education), and units of local government.

Q4: How many awards will be made?

DOJ expects to enter into one cooperative agreement award of up to \$4,750,000.

Q5: Are applications from teams of partnering entities acceptable?

DOJ encourages applications that involve two or more entities. In fact, priority consideration will be given to applications that reflect a high degree of collaboration and partnership with other organizations possessing expertise and experience in the areas of procedural justice, bias reduction, and racial reconciliation (see page 31 of the solicitation). Subrecipients might be selected for their expertise in a particular aspect of the project to ensure success in meeting the Department's expectations for this initiative. Applicants should include a robust discussion of the subrecipients' expertise and their planned contribution to the project. Applicants are strongly encouraged to include letters of intent or signed memorandum of understanding with key project partners indicating their support for the proposal and commitment to carrying out the project's goals and objectives.

Note that one eligible entity must be the applicant and the other(s) must be proposed as subrecipient(s). The applicant must be the entity with primary responsibility for administering the funding and managing the entire project.

Q6: May an entity submit more than one application as lead applicant?

No. Only one application per lead applicant will be considered.

Q7: May partners or subgrantees be part of more than one application?

Yes. Subrecipients may be part of multiple proposals.

Q8: May an entity be a lead in one application, and a partner or subgrantee in one or more other applications submitted to the Department of Justice?

Yes. Applications that include a partner(s) or subgrantee(s) who was (were) primary in a separate application(s) will be accepted.

Q9: Beyond reviewing the solicitation document, is there any opportunity to ask questions about the requirements of the solicitation?

Yes. Questions may be submitted to: NCBCTJSolicitation@usdoj.gov for inclusion in the regularly-updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document.

In addition, there will be a pre-application conference call on Wednesday, May 7, from 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET. The purpose of this call is for federal staff to respond to substantive questions about the solicitation requirements in order to assist applicants, or entities considering applying, in formulating their applications. Applicants must register to participate in the bidders' call by emailing NCBCTJSolicitation@usdoj.gov on or before 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 5 to express their intention to participate in the call. The call in number and passcode will be distributed via email.

Q10: Will the 5 pilot sites described in the solicitation be within one jurisdiction? Will the successful applicant determine the location of the 5 pilot sites?

The applicant will deliver services and coordinate activities in 5 pilot sites across the country. The pilot site selection activities are described on pages 13-14 of the solicitation. DOJ has elected to make this award through a cooperative agreement. Under a cooperative agreement there is significant government involvement in project design and implementation. The grantee can expect that DOJ and its component agencies will consult regularly on project activities and will review and approve grantee project plans, draft deliverables, and all major project components, including the selection of pilot sites.

Q11: Is DOJ targeting a minimum population for the pilot sites?

The criteria the applicant should consider in proposing a strategy for selecting the 5 pilot sites are enumerated on page 14 of the solicitation. The applicant is specifically asked to address "What is the most efficacious unit of implementation for this kind of work (e.g., block, census tract, neighborhood, other)." DOJ has prescribed no criteria regarding population size.

Q12: What communities of color should be targeted under this program?

The work that will take place in the 5 pilot cities around enhancing procedural justice, reducing implicit bias, and facilitating racial reconciliation will target specific communities identified by the applicants as potentially experiencing the justice system as discriminatory.

Q13: Is the population to be served limited to African American men?

No, the population is not limited to African American men. The initiative targets all communities identified by the applicants as potentially experiencing the justice system as discriminatory. In addition, page 14 of the solicitation describes how youth should be involved and page 15 describes how victims of domestic violence sexual assault, and stalking should be involved regardless of gender.

Q14: Do applicants have to name the 5 pilot sites they are proposing in their application?

No. The applicant must discuss the criteria proposed for selecting the pilot sites (see pages 14-15 of the solicitation) but the sites themselves will be selected after the award is made in consultation with the Department of Justice.

Q15: My community is interested in serving as a pilot site. What can I do?

The pilot sites be selected after the award is made (September, 2014) in consultation with the Department of Justice.

Communities interested in serving as pilot sites might proactively reach out to other entities to declare their interest before the applications are due on June 18. Alternatively, communities could wait until the award announcement is made by the Department of Justice (September, 2014) and then contact the Awardee to express interest.

Q16. May grant funds be used to buy a facility and land?

No. These are not allowable expenses.

Q17. Can DOJ send us a list of applicants so that we can plan possible partnerships?

No. DOJ does not know in advance who will be submitting applications. However, an entity might consider contacting its State Administering Agency (which administers your state block grant funds from DOJ) or other state or municipal criminal justice or public safety authority to inquire whether those agencies are convening interested partners. Another strategy would be to review the published literature on procedural justice, implicit bias, and racial reconciliation and identify the agencies and organizations that are active in these areas to identify potential partners.

Q18. What is the difference between the 5 pilot sites and partners or subrecipients?

The goals and deliverables related to selecting and working with the 5 pilot sites are described on pages 13-15 of the solicitation.

Applicants may (are encouraged to, see the cover of the solicitation) build application teams that involve two or more entities in order to most effectively meet the goals and deliverables described in the solicitation. These partners may be sub-grantees (“subrecipients”) of the prime application (the awardee). The applicant should propose the fiscal strategy that best supports their project design.

The solicitation is not prescriptive about whether the 5 pilot sites should be subgrantees or subrecipients of the awardee. Applicants should propose a strategy for supporting the work in the pilot sites using the means they feel are most effective for this purpose.

Q19. Can grant funds be budgeted to hire additional personnel specifically for this grant?

Yes, applicants may propose and budget for any staffing strategy they feel will most effectively achieve the goals and deliverables outlined in the solicitation. There are certain limitations on use of award funds for employee compensation described on page 21 of the solicitation.

Q20. Can the five pilot sites be located in one community, for example the police department, local school district, etc.?

Applicants may propose any strategy for selecting pilot sites they feel will most effectively achieve the goals and deliverables outlined in the solicitation.

Q21. Pages 36-37 of the solicitation suggest applicants contact the Department of Justice (NCBCTJSolicitation@usdoj.gov) if they experience unforeseen grants.gov technical issues when submitting their applications. Does that mean that submissions after the 11:59 p.m. June 18 deadline will be considered?

We encourage applicants to submit their applications in advance of the 11:59 p.m. deadline on June 18 in order to avoid any unforeseen submission problems as the solicitation closes. Grants.gov will not accept applications after the 11:59 p.m. deadline on June 18.

In limited, extremely exigent circumstances (e.g. natural disasters effecting the electrical / communications infrastructure of a major area) or in the case of Grants.gov technical issues beyond the control of the user applicants may contact the Department as described on pages 36-37 to request consideration of a late submission. Page 37 of the solicitation states:

The following conditions are generally insufficient to justify late submissions:

- failure to register in SAM or Grants.gov in sufficient time
- failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its Web site
- failure to follow each instruction in the OJP solicitation
- technical issues with the applicant's computer or information technology environment, including firewalls.

Q22. Will DOJ develop a list of organizations interested in being a pilot site for a specific region or facilitate team or partnership building in any other way?

No. The Department of Justice will not have a role in identifying potential partners or facilitating partnership building during the application-development stage of this initiative.

The Department of Justice will consult with the awardee on the final determination of the pilot sites.

Q23. Is it expected that the applicant would identify performance measures to assess the initiative as a whole, in addition to those specified on pages 23-24?

The performance measures listed on pages 23-24 will be submitted to the Department of Justice through regular reporting throughout the award period. Applicants do not have discretion to disregard any of those measures.

Applicants may propose additional performance measures they feel will be useful in assessing the implementation of the initiative.

Collection of data from pilot sites, described on pages 15-16 of the solicitation, is distinct from the performance measurement submission requirement on pages 23-24. Data collected from the pilot sites might be used to inform an assessment of the initiative as required in 2(e) on page 31 of the solicitation. The applicant can propose other data that would inform such an assessment.

Q 24. Must applicants identify specific evidence-based models that pilot sites would be required to choose from to address youth, or should the applicant simply demonstrate familiarity with examples of relevant evidence-based models?

Applicants should address evidence-based models in the design of their project in the way they feel will (1) most effectively achieve the goals and deliverables outlined in the solicitation; and (2) communicate to the reviewers the applicant's familiarity with and understanding of evidence-

based models in this field. Applicants should be attentive to the discussion of strategies that must be included on pages 27-28 under Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative.

Q25. Can sites involved in other Department of Justice initiatives be selected as pilot sites for this initiative? Would these sites be in addition to or part of 5 pilot sites to be selected per pages 14-15 of the solicitation?

There is no prohibition against proposing pilot sites that are part of other Department of Justice initiatives. There will be a total of five pilot sites under this initiative.

Pilot sites need not be named in the application—only the criteria proposed for selecting them are required in the application.

Q26. Must the lead applicant be incorporated and if so also be 501C3?

Eligible applicants are: national, regional, state, or local public and private entities, including non-profit organizations (including tribal nonprofit organizations), faith-based and community organizations, institutions of higher education (including tribal institutions of higher education), and units of local government.

Q27. How will the proposal reviewers determine the expertise of service providers submitted as part of the proposal?

The review process and selection criteria to be used by the reviewers are printed on pages 31-32 of the solicitation. The criteria that expressly address qualifications of proposed experts are under (3) Capabilities and Competencies on page 31.

Q28. Should the applicant propose a full project evaluation plan applicable to all proposed sites or propose separate evaluation plans for each individual proposed site?

Applicants should propose an evaluation strategy they feel is the most effective for achieving the goals and deliverables of this initiative.

Q29. Is there public information available about current OJP grantees?

Yes. OJP grant information is available at <http://grants.ojp.usdoj.gov:85/selector/main>.

Q30. Would selected pilot sites be considered sub-recipients and receive funding from the awardee?

The solicitation is not prescriptive about whether the 5 pilot sites should be subgrantees or subrecipients. Applicants should propose a strategy for supporting the work in the pilot sites using the means they feel are most effective for this purpose.

Q31. Are there organizations in states / municipalities which will coordinate applications from entities / partners within their jurisdictions?

The Department of Justice has no requirement that applications from a particular jurisdiction be coordinated through a designated agency.

Q32. Will the pilot sites bear their own costs of participating in the initiative?

The applicant teams should propose a strategy for identifying and supporting pilot sites that is acceptable to the pilot sites themselves. This includes, as appropriate and relevant in a particular proposal, describing how activities in the pilot sites will be supported with funding from this initiative.

Q33. Does the Department of Justice have video or other training materials on racial reconciliation?

Applicants may review materials on this topic available from the Department of Justice at the National Criminal Justice Reference Center: <https://www.ncjrs.gov/> and on the website of the Community Oriented Policing Services Office (<http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/>).

Q34. Will the Department of Justice make a list of individuals and organizations that participated in the May 7 pre-application conference call available?

No.

Q35. When will the successful applicant be notified they have received the award? Will there be a public announcement once the award is made?

The successful applicant will be notified on or before September 30, 2014. A public announcement will follow.

Q36. For the budget items addressed on pages 27-28 of the solicitation, are those totals inclusive or exclusive of overhead rates?

Either budgeting approach is acceptable. E.g., the \$200,000 total which must be budgeted for youth mentoring activities may be inclusive of your approved overhead rate, or, you may include overhead costs in addition to \$200,000 for mentoring activities. You may use the budgeting strategy you feel supports the best possible project design. However, the minimum that may be budgeted for mentoring activities is \$200,000.

Note that the total amount available for this project is \$4.75M, including all overhead costs.

Q37. If DOJ stipulates after the award is made, during the pilot site selection process, that pilot site(s) far from the awardee's location be included, this could greatly alter the anticipated budget and project timeline because re-budgeting for travel costs and time for relationship-building would become a necessity. Is any guidance available about the potential impact of the final pilot site selection being far away from the location of the successful awardee?

The applicant's proposed strategy for designing criteria to select pilot sites will be a key consideration in the review of the proposals. Reviewers will be looking closely to determine if the proposed pilot site selection criteria will support the successful implementation of the National Center for Building Community Trust and Justice. Budget estimates for selecting sites in various regions of the country can be approximated in the applicant's budget submission. If budget modifications are required post-award when pilot site selection is finalized, DOJ will accommodate a request from the applicant for a budget modification to better achieve the goals of the program.

Q38. What is the page limitation for the Narrative portion of the application?

On May 28 the solicitation was amended to clarify that the Narrative portion of the application may be up to 30 double-spaced pages using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman is preferred) with 1-inch margins. See page 26 of the solicitation for the corrected text.

Q39. May funds budgeted for sub grantees be placed under "Contracts" category in the budget worksheet?

Funds that are being awarded through subcontracts (regardless of whether you call them subgrantees or subrecipients) properly go under "Contracts."

Q40. Does the term "deliver" mean to implement in communities a finalized and DOJ-approved communications and messaging strategy for promoting broader public understanding of the issues, or to deliver a strategy to DOJ for consideration and later use?

The term "deliver" means to create and submit for DOJ approval a communications strategy promoting broader public understanding of the issues. Applicants should indicate which activities they plan to undertake during the 36 month project period, and which might be longer-term goals.

Q41. Does the term "broader public understanding" mean to apply to discourse in just the five pilot sites, or is a national communications campaign, initially developed in the five pilot sites, envisioned under this goal?

The broader public understanding should be national in scope.

Q42. Do references in the solicitation to DOJ-funded projects in the areas of procedural justice, implicit bias, and racial reconciliation signify that applicants must include the researchers and project staff aligned with those projects on their teams for the National Center for Building Community Trust and Justice?

No. The purpose of the references to DOJ funded projects in the solicitation (e.g. pages 7, 15, 16, 18) is to ensure that applicants propose ways to leverage DOJ investments in the areas of procedural justice, implicit bias, and racial reconciliation where appropriate and avoid proposing redundant projects under this solicitation. Applicants may propose and justify any team members, including researchers, whom they feel have the appropriate expertise and experience to make the proposed project successful. Criteria for justifying project staff and partners are outlined under the "Capabilities and Competencies" section on pages 31-32 of the solicitation.

Q43. Do all of the associated CFDA numbers need to be listed in block 10 of the SF424?

No. Insert any one of the associated CFDA's into block 10 on the SF 424.

Q44. The solicitation specifies the font size and spacing for the Abstract and the Program Narrative (page 26), but does not specify font, font size, and spacing for any tables, charts, graphs, endnotes, footnotes etc., within the Program Narrative, or the Budget Narrative. Is there guidance for the formatting of tables, charts, graphs, endnotes, footnotes and the Budget Narrative?

You may use any format you feel best presents the information to be conveyed for the Budget Narrative.

If you are including charts, graphs, footnotes, etc. in the Program Narrative you may use a format for those you feel best presents the information to the reviewers, but the page limit for the Program Narrative, including text and any other content, is 30 pages.