

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

FY 2022 Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence Solicitation

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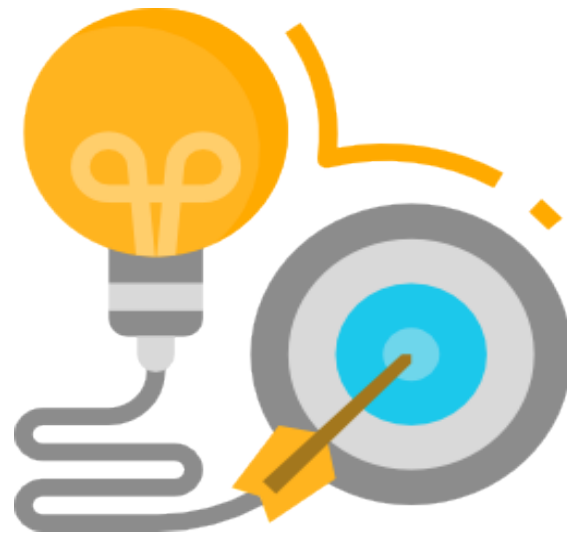
This webinar will begin shortly



BJA
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Agenda

- Grants.gov and JustGrants
- Program Overview
- Important Dates and Information
- Goals and Objectives
- Eligibility
- Federal Award Information/Use of Funds
- Application Submission
 - Certification as to Provision of Postconviction DNA Testing and Preservation of Biological Evidence
- Review Process
- Merit Review Criteria
- Application Checklist



Two-step process

Step 1: The applicant must submit by the Grants.gov deadline the required Application for Federal Assistance standard form (SF)-424 and a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form when they register in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>

To register in Grants.gov, the applicant will need to ensure that its System for Award Management (SAM) registration is current.

DUE June 22, 2022; 8:59pm ET



Step 2: The applicant must then submit the **full application** including attachments in JustGrants at [JustGrants.usdoj.gov](https://www.justgrants.usdoj.gov). To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline. OJP encourages applicants to review, the “How to Apply” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) and the JustGrants website for more information, resources, and training.

DUE June 27, 2022; 8:59pm ET

BJA Funding Webinar





The Federal Funding Process: First Steps to Applying, How to Prepare Now, and Other Considerations

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THE FEDERAL FUNDING PROCESS: THE FIRST STEPS TO APPLYING, HOW TO PREPARE NOW, & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Gregory Torain, BJA, Elizabeth Wolfe, BJA, and
Lisa Hartman, JustGrants

 
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EDUCATION SERIES

January 26, 2022
1:00 – 2:30 pm

0:01 / 1:29:22

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<https://bja.ojp.gov/media/video/42231>



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Program Overview



Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence provides funding to States, units of local government, and public institutions of higher education to assist in defraying the costs associated with postconviction case identification, case review, evidence location, and DNA testing in violent felony cases (as defined by state law) where the results of such testing might show actual innocence.

Additional information, including funded awards and current funding opportunities, can be found at:

<https://bja.ojp.gov/program/postconviction-testing-dna-evidence/overview>

Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence

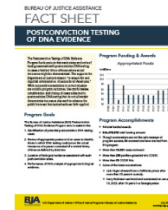
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Overview

Under the Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence program, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) provides funding to help defray the costs (e.g., of additional personnel, overtime, testing supplies and services) associated with postconviction DNA testing for violent felony offenses (as defined by state law) in which actual innocence might be demonstrated.

Funds may be used to review suitable postconviction cases and to locate and analyze biological evidence. Only a limited portion of funds may be used for case identification activities.

This program is one of the forensic science programs that moved from the National Institute of Justice to BJA in FY 2020.



Overview

News

Funding

Archives

FY 2022 Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence

Opportunity ID	O-BJA-2022-171340
Closing Date	June 27, 2022
Posting Date	May 12, 2022
Grants.gov Deadline	June 22, 2022, 8:59 pm Eastern
Application JustGrants Deadline	June 27, 2022, 8:59 pm Eastern

Goals and Objectives



Goals

The goal of this program is to assist states and units of local government with postconviction DNA testing in cases of violent felony offenses where actual innocence might be demonstrated

Objectives

Funded projects are expected to implement some aspect of each of the following activities, except for case identification, which is not mandatory:

1. Identify potential postconviction DNA testing cases. A maximum of 15 percent of the proposed budget may be dedicated to case identification activities.
2. Review appropriate postconviction cases to identify those in which DNA testing could prove the actual innocence of a person convicted of a violent felony offense as defined by state law.
3. Locate biological evidence associated with such postconviction cases.
4. Perform DNA analysis of appropriate biological evidence and report and review DNA test results.

Federal Award Information



- Anticipated amount of funding:
\$10,600,600
- Anticipated number of awards to be funded:
22
- Period of performance start date:
October 1st, 2022
- Period of performance duration:
36 months
- Anticipated maximum amount per award
\$500,000



Page 1 – Cover Page

- City or township governments
- County governments
- Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
- State governments

For purposes of this solicitation, “state” means any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.



Expenses - Permitted



- **Salary and benefits of additional employees**
- **Overtime**
- **Travel (limited) – Funds may be used for expenses directly associated with case ID, case review, location of evidence or DNA analysis.**
- **Computer equipment – to be used exclusively for case ID, case review, location of evidence or DNA analysis.**
- **Lab supplies – for DNA analysis of biological evidence.**
- **Engage additional (temporary personnel)**
- **Procurement from private labs of DNA analyses**
- **Training (limited) – only for directly related to case ID, case review, location of evidence and DNA analysis.**

Expenses – Not Permitted



- **Among other things, funds may not be used for:**
 - **Costs for postconviction relief litigation after DNA testing of biological evidence has been completed**
 - **Salaries and benefits for victim advocacy services**
 - **Salaries, benefits, or overtime for staff who are not directly engaged in case ID, case review, location of biological evidence, or DNA analysis of biological evidence**
 - **Laboratory equipment**
 - **Construction**
 - **Renovation**
 - **Office furnishings**
 - **Witness travel**
 - **General litigation training or non-postconviction training**

Forensic Genetic Genealogy



If you plan to conduct Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching (FGGS) using funds from your federal award, you must make note of the following:

- No DNA profiles (including SNP profiles generated for FGGS testing) generated with funding from this award may be entered into any non-governmental database (e.g. GEDmatch) without prior express written approval from BJA. Each profile tested must receive such written approval from BJA.
- Program activity involving FGGS is subject to the DOJ [*Interim Policy on Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching*](#) or to the final policy, when issued.

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The following application elements must be included in the application to meet the **basic minimum requirements** to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding:

- Proposal Abstract
- Proposal Narrative
- Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (Web-based Form) (The web-based form includes the budget details and the budget narrative.)

1. OJP screens applications to ensure they meet the basic minimum requirements prior to conducting the peer review.
2. Applications that meet the basic minimum requirements, will be evaluated for technical merit by a peer review panel(s).

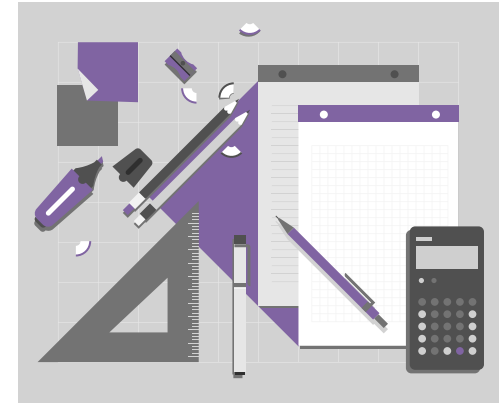
Although specific requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all OJP solicitations:

- The application must be submitted by an **eligible type of applicant**.
- The application must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable).
- The application must be **responsive to the scope** of the solicitation.
- The application must include all items necessary to meet the **basic minimum requirements**.

Merit Review Criteria



1. **Statement of the Problem/Description of the Issue (20%)** - evaluate the applicant's understanding of the program/issue to be addressed.
2. **Project Design and Implementation (50%)**- evaluate the adequacy of the proposal, including the goals, objectives, timelines, milestones, and deliverables.
3. **Capabilities and Competencies (15%)** - evaluate the administrative and technical capacity of the applicant to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives.
4. **Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (5%)** - evaluate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements and the plan for collecting the required data.
5. **Budget (10%)** - evaluate for completeness, cost effectiveness, and allowability (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).



See pages 15-16 for more information

Merit Review Criteria - Example



Project Design and Implementation

- Describe the strategy to address the needs identified in the Description of the Issue, particularly any areas of specific concern and the relevance to the goals and objectives of the program (see “Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables”).
- Describe the implementation approach, including case review selection criteria and the target number of cases to be reviewed with award funds.
- Discuss how funding under this initiative will help to identify and test postconviction DNA cases and demonstrates an awareness of current methods for DNA analysis of forensic evidence. Past performance successes may be noted but must not be a predominant part of the project design and implementation.
- Discuss how the applicant will improve the quality and efficacy of case reviews.
- Describe the feasibility of the proposed project, including the likelihood of completion within the proposed period of performance
- Provide awareness of potential pitfalls and describe the mitigation strategies should pitfalls be encountered.
- Outline the applicant’s innovation and creativity (where appropriate).

See pages 11-12 for more information

Pages 13-14

Certification as to Provision of Postconviction DNA Testing and Preservation of Biological Evidence

An applicant **must** submit an express certification from the chief legal officer of the state (typically the Attorney General) that the state:

1. Provides postconviction DNA testing of specified biological evidence under a state statute, or under state rules, regulations, or practices, for persons convicted after trial and under a sentence of imprisonment or death for a state offense of murder or forcible rape, in a manner intended to ensure a reasonable process for resolving claims of actual innocence.
2. Preserves biological evidence secured in relation to the investigation or prosecution of a state offense of murder or forcible rape, under a state statute, local ordinances, or state or local rules, regulations, or practices, in a manner intended to ensure that reasonable measures are taken by all jurisdictions within the state to preserve such evidence.

Pages 13-14

Certification as to Provision of Postconviction DNA Testing and Preservation of Biological Evidence

Note: The certification must be executed by the chief legal officer of the appropriate state for each state for which postconviction cases are sought to be funded consistent with this solicitation. Funds will not be made available to applicants (if awarded) that fail to submit a properly executed certification(s).

Certification must be made on BJA-provided template (link in solicitation and below).

<https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/certification-as-to-provision-postconviction-dna-testing-preservation-biological-evidence.pdf>

Pages 13-14

Certification as to Provision of Postconviction DNA Testing and Preservation of Biological Evidence

While it may be submitted with the application package, submission of this certification is not required at the time of application. If an award is made, access to award funds will be withheld until this certification is received and approved by BJA.

Note to all applicants, in particular, applicants proposing postconviction DNA testing projects involving cases outside of the applicant's state: The certification must be executed by the chief legal officer of the appropriate state for each state for which postconviction cases are sought to be funded consistent with this solicitation. Funds will not be made available to applicants (if awarded) that fail to submit a properly executed certification(s).

Pages 17-19

BJA FY 22 Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence

This application checklist has been created as an aid in developing an application. The [DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#) is another resource.

What an Applicant Must Do:

Prior to registering in Grants.gov:

- Confirm your Entity's [System Award Management \(SAM\) Registration Information](#) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

To register in Grants.gov:

- Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Previous Year Application Data



Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence Application Breakdown

FY 2018		FY 2019		FY2020		FY2021	
Apps	Awds	Apps	Awds	Apps	Awds	Apps	Awds
15	9	12	11	20	13	13	13
60%		92%		65%		100%	

Important Dates and Information



BJA FY 22 Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence

Assistance Listing Number #	16.820
Grants.gov Opportunity Number:	O-BJA-2022-171340
Solicitation Release Date:	May 12, 2022 9:00 AM
Grants.gov Deadline:	June 22, 2022 8:59 PM
Application JustGrants Deadline:	June 27, 2022 8:59 PM

Grants.gov

- Provides technical assistance with submitting the SF-424 and SF-LLL
 - **Customer Support Hotline** – 800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035
 - Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays
 - **Email**
 - <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>
 - support@grants.gov
- Provides information on available federal funding opportunities for various federal agencies

JustGrants Technical Support

- Provides technical assistance with submitting the full application in DOJ's Justice Grants System (JustGrants)
 - **Customer Support Hotline** – 833-872-5175
 - Monday – Friday between 5:00 AM and 9:00 PM ET
 - Saturday, Sunday, and Federal holidays from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM ET
 - **Email**
 - <https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/user-support>
 - JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov

OJP Response Center

- Provides solicitation support and general assistance
- **email** - grants@ncjrs.gov
- **web chat** - <https://webcontact.ncjrs.gov/ncjchat/chat.jsp>
- **toll free** at 800-851-3420
- **TTY** at 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only)

The Response Center hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday

Subscribe

- Subscribe to receive email notifications of new funding opportunities and other resources
 - Sign-up to receive the twice monthly **JUSTINFO** newsletter as well as the weekly **Funding News** email
 - Subscribe at <https://www.ojp.gov/subscribe> and be sure to select “Grants/funding” as an area of interest

Thank you for your hard work and dedication!

We will now address questions

Enter in the [Q&A](#) box and send to [All Panelists](#)