

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



Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program

FY 2020 Competitive Grant Solicitation

CFDA #16.037

Grants.gov Solicitation Number: BJA-2020-18435

Solicitation Release Date: April 16, 2020

Application Deadline: 11:59 p.m. eastern time on June 15, 2020

The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [Bureau of Justice Assistance \(BJA\)](#) is seeking applications for funding to strengthen the medical examiner-coroner system. This program furthers the Department's mission by providing resources to improve medicolegal death investigations (MDI) in the United States.

This solicitation incorporates the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) by reference. The OJP Grant Application Resource Guide provides guidance to applicants on how to prepare and submit applications for funding to OJP. If this solicitation expressly modifies any provision in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide, the applicant is to follow the guidelines in this solicitation as to that provision.

Eligibility (Who may apply):

The following entities are eligible to apply:

- Agencies directly involved in medicolegal death investigations as part of their normal business, such as medical examiner offices and coroner offices
- States (including territories)
- Units of local government
- Federally recognized Indian tribal governments (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior) that perform law enforcement functions
- Nonprofit and for-profit organizations (including tribal nonprofit and for-profit organizations)
- Institutions of higher education (including tribal institutions of higher education)
- Certain qualified individuals

Eligible applicants for [Purpose Area 1, Forensic Pathology Fellowships](#) are limited to entities with programs that should meet or exceed the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME).¹

Eligible applicants for [Purpose Area 2, Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation](#) are limited to domestic medical examiner and coroner offices actively seeking accreditation through an independent accrediting organization such as the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) and the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (IACME) or other appropriate accrediting bodies.

All recipients and subrecipients (including any for-profit organization) must forgo any profit or management fee.

BJA will consider 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). The applicant must be the entity that would have primary responsibility for carrying out the award, including administering the funding and managing the 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. For additional information on subawards, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Contact information

For technical assistance with submitting an application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>, or at support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Support Hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

An applicant that experiences unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond its control that prevent it from submitting its application by the deadline must email the BJA contact identified below **within 24 hours after the application deadline** to request approval to submit its application after the deadline. Additional information on reporting technical issues appears under “Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues” in the How To Apply (Grants.gov) section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

For assistance with any other requirements of this solicitation, contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Response Center: toll-free at 1-800-851-3420; via TTY at 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only); email grants@ncjrs.gov; fax to 301-240-5830; or web chat at <https://webcontact.ncjrs.gov/ncjchat/chat.jsp>. The NCJRS Response Center hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date.

Deadline details

Applicants must register with Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html> prior to submitting an application. All applications are due by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on June 15, 2020.

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

¹ [ACGME Program Requirements for Graduate Medical Education in Forensic Pathology, 2017](#).

indicates successful and timely submission. OJP urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the application due date, 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.

An applicant must use the **Add Attachment** button to attach a file to its application. Do not click the paperclip icon to attach files. This action will not attach the files to the application. After adding an attachment, select the **View Attachment** button to confirm you attached the correct file. To remove the file, select the **Delete Attachment** button.

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

For additional information, see the “How to Apply (Grants.gov)” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

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Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program

CFDA # 16.037

A. Program Description

Overview

With this solicitation, BJA seeks proposals to strengthen the medical examiner/coroner (ME/C) system in the United States. Through this program, BJA will support grants in two focus areas by:

- (1) Supporting forensic pathology fellowships
- (2) Providing resources necessary for medical examiner and coroner offices to achieve accreditation

Statutory Authority: Any awards under this solicitation will be made under the statutory authority provided by Department of Justice Appropriations Act, 2020, Pub. L. 116-93, 133 Stat 2317, 2407.

Program-specific Information

BJA's Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program is designed to increase the supply of forensic pathologists and support the enhancement of MDI services nationwide. BJA is seeking proposals in two purpose areas:

- [Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships](#)
- [Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation](#)

Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables

The goals of the Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program are to:

- 1) Increase the supply of qualified forensic pathology practitioners.
- 2) Strengthen the quality and consistency of ME/C services.

Proposals are expected to clearly identify the purpose area to which they are applying.

The Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables are directly related to the performance measures that demonstrate the results of the work completed, as discussed in [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#), under Program Narrative.

Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships. Competition ID: BJA-2020-18436

Background: There is an extreme shortage of board-certified forensic pathologists in the United States,² as underscored in the 2009 report by the National Academies of Sciences on

² National Commission on Forensic Science *Increasing the Number, Retention, and Quality of Board-Certified Forensic Pathologists*, August 2015. <https://www.justice.gov/ncfs/file/641646/download>.

strengthening forensic science in the United States.³ This call was reaffirmed by several recent reports developed through national initiatives dedicated to improving the quality and practice of forensic sciences. Both the National Commission on Forensic Science⁴ and the Office of Science and Technology Policy, Fast-Track Action Committee on Strengthening the Medicolegal Death Investigation System⁵ recommended investments in workforce development initiatives for forensic pathologists in order to increase their quantity and thereby support the medicolegal death investigation needs of our nation.⁶

Through this funding opportunity, applications are being solicited from institutions with current ACGME-accredited **forensic pathology** fellowship programs to recruit quality candidates who have completed all necessary medical education and pathology residency requirements. This program will strengthen the ME/C system by increasing the number and quality of board-certified forensic pathologists.

Agencies that are awarded funds under this purpose area will be required to provide information to BJA, generally in the form of semi-annual progress reports, throughout the duration of the award. These reports should describe all relevant progress, including any issues encountered and/or successes achieved. Once identified, the awarded agency should identify the fellow in subsequent progress reports to assist BJA in tracking progress of the funded fellow. Awardees are encouraged to report to BJA any additional information about the fellowship program that may assist BJA to better serve the MDI community.

Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation. Competition ID: BJA-2020-18437

Background: Accreditation provides an independent measure of quality assurance by assessing that an office maintains written policies and procedures and adequate staff, equipment, training, and suitable physical facilities to produce a forensically documented, accurate, and credible death investigation product. ⁷ Examples of accrediting bodies that publish professional standards on procedures for conducting autopsies and medicolegal death investigations are the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME)⁸ and the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (IACME).⁹

Through this funding opportunity, applications are being solicited from ME/C agencies seeking accreditation through an appropriate ME/C accrediting agency such as, but not limited to, those listed above. Final determination of the appropriateness of an accrediting body for the purposes of this solicitation will be made by BJA. This program will strengthen the quality of

³ Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward, National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council, August 2009. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/228091.pdf>.

⁴ DOJ National Commission on Forensic Science. <https://www.justice.gov/ncfs>.

⁵ Views on Increasing the Number, Retention, and Quality of Board-Certified Forensic Pathologists. DOJ National Commission on Forensic Science. August 11, 2015. <https://www.justice.gov/ncfs/file/787356/download>.

⁶ White House National Science and Technology Council report on Strengthening the Medicolegal Death Investigation System: Improving Data Systems. September 2016. https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/NSTC/strengthening_the_medicolegal_death_investigation_system_final.pdf

⁷ Recommendation on the Accreditation of Medicolegal Death Investigation Offices. DOJ National Commission on Forensic Science. January 30, 2015. <https://www.justice.gov/archives/ncfs/page/file/787236/download>.

⁸ National Association of Medical Examiners. Inspection and Accreditation. <https://name.memberclicks.net/assets/docs/1d082f4f-e2a4-4a84-91b7-a8eb1ae089ee.pdf>.

⁹ International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners. Accreditation. <http://www.theiacme.com/accreditation>.

ME/C services in the United States by ensuring that agencies performing postmortem examinations are in compliance with industry and professional standards and performance criteria. Funds may not be used to maintain existing accreditation.

Agencies that are awarded funds under this purpose area will be required to provide information to BJA, generally in the form of semi-annual progress reports, throughout the duration of the award. BJA is interested in, among other things, understanding the advantages and challenges that arise with implementing an accreditation program, especially when resources and policies vary among jurisdictions. Reports should address progress made in achieving accreditation and, for example, costs, benefits, and other technical, administrative, policy, or legal gaps that support, sustain, or limit the achievement of accreditation.

The Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables are directly related to the performance measures that demonstrate the results of the work completed, as discussed under [What an Application Should Include](#).

Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities

Applicants should note OJP may conduct or support an evaluation of the programs and activities funded under this solicitation. For additional information, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) section, entitled, “Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities.”

OJP Priority Areas

In FY 2020, and in addition to executing any statutory prioritization that may be applicable, OJP will give priority consideration to applications as follows:

- Applications that address specific challenges that rural communities face.
- Applications that demonstrate that the individuals who are intended to benefit from the requested grant reside in high-poverty areas or persistent-poverty counties.
- Applications that offer enhancements to public safety in economically distressed communities (Qualified Opportunity Zones).

To receive priority consideration under the rural priority, applicants must describe what makes the geographic service area rural (using U.S. Census or other appropriate government data; for assistance, applicants may wish to refer to <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/urban-rural.html>), how isolated the area is from needed services, and how they will address specific challenges in rural communities.

To receive priority consideration under the poverty priority, the applicant must provide information to demonstrate that the individuals who are intended to benefit from the requested grant reside in high-poverty areas or persistent poverty counties. For purposes of this priority consideration, the term “high-poverty area” means any census tract with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent as measured by the 2013–2017 5-year data series available from the American Community Survey of the Census Bureau (applicants may search by census tract at <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2017/>) and the term “persistent poverty counties” means any county that has had 20 percent or more of its population living in poverty over the past 30 years, as measured by the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses and the most recent Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (applicants

may search by county at <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/dec/census-poverty.html> and at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe.html>).

To receive priority consideration under the Qualified Opportunity Zones priority, applicants must include information that specifies how the project will enhance public safety in the specified QOZs. For resources on QOZs, and for a current list of designated QOZs, see the U.S. Department of the Treasury's resource webpage, accessible at <https://www.cdfifund.gov/pages/opportunity-zones.aspx>.

B. Federal Award Information

Under Purpose Area 1:

Maximum number of awards BJA expects to make	8
Estimated maximum dollar amount for each award	\$125,000
Total amount anticipated to be awarded under Purpose Area 1	\$1,000,000

Under Purpose Area 2:

Maximum number of awards BJA expects to make	10 (at \$100,000 each) or 1 (totaling \$1,000,000)
Total amount anticipated to be awarded under Purpose Area 2	\$1,000,000

The total estimated amount awarded under this solicitation is up to \$2,000,000.

BJA expects to make awards for a 24-month period of performance, to begin on October 1, 2020.

All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

PLEASE NOTE: BJA strongly encourages medical examiner fellowship applicants and awardees to review the following information regarding "loan repayment" opportunities through the link provided. The loan repayment program is not managed through this solicitation, BJA, or OJP; all questions should be directed to the organization.

The NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) are a set of programs established by Congress and designed to recruit and retain highly qualified health professionals into biomedical or biobehavioral research careers. Additional detailed information about each LRP is provided at www.lrp.nih.gov/about_the_programs/index.aspx and www.lrp.nih.gov/apply.

Applicants from medical examiner or coroner offices may be eligible for the Extramural Loan Repayment Program for Clinical Researchers (LRP-CR) as long as they contractually agree to engage in NIH mission-relevant research for an average of at least 20 hours each week for at least 2 years and are working with human material. The Extramural LRP repays up to \$50,000 annually of a researcher's qualified educational debt. The applicant does not need to work at a hospital but needs to be employed or supported by an institution described as follows: "a domestic nonprofit foundation (e.g., universities), professional nonprofit association, or other nonprofit institution, or a U.S. government agency (Federal, State, or local). A domestic

foundation, professional association, or institution is considered to be nonprofit if exempt from Federal tax under the provisions of Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 501).”

Please visit the LRP website at www.lrp.nih.gov, send an email to lrp@nih.gov, or call the Division of Loan Repayment Information Center toll free at (866) 849-4047. Applicants are strongly encouraged to pay attention to Institute or Center (IC) specific funding priorities, and also to discuss their career interests with an IC scientific liaison: www.lrp.nih.gov/contact-engage#ContactEngageContactListsTile.

Type of Award

BJA expects to make awards under this solicitation as grants. See the “Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements” section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls

Award recipients and subrecipients (including recipients or subrecipients that are pass-through entities) must, as described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements¹⁰ as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.303, comply with standards for financial and program management. See [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Budget Information

Purpose Area 1: Funds may be used toward a salary/stipend for the fellow and related costs that may include fringe benefits (if applicable), at the applicant institution’s discretion. Up to \$50,000 of the \$100,000 may be used for other related direct or indirect costs. Related costs may include any combination of the fellow’s fees, project costs, professional society membership fees, and conference travel, among other allowable expenses incurred during the award period of performance.

Purpose Area 2: Funds may be used to support ME/C office accreditation.

Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

This solicitation does not require a match. For information on cost sharing or match requirements, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Please see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the following:

[Pre-agreement Costs \(also known as Pre-award Costs\)](#)

[Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs](#)

[Costs Associated with Language Assistance \(if applicable\)](#)

C. Eligibility Information

For eligibility information, see title page.

¹⁰ The "Part 200 Uniform Requirements" means the DOJ regulation at 2 C.F.R Part 2800, which adopts (with certain modifications) the provisions of 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

For information on cost sharing or match requirements, see [Section B. Federal Award Information](#).

D. Application and Submission Information

What an Application Should Include

The following application elements **MUST** be included in the application submission for an application to meet the basic minimum requirements (BMR) to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding: Program Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative.

See the “Application Elements and Formatting Instructions” section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on what happens to an application that does not contain all the specified elements, or that is nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation.

1. Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form (SF)-424)

The SF-424 is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on completing the SF-424.

Intergovernmental Review: This solicitation (“funding opportunity”) **is not** subject to [Executive Order 12372](#). (In completing the SF-424, an applicant is to answer question 19 by selecting the response that the “Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.”)

2. Project Abstract

Include a project abstract that summarizes the proposed project in 400 words or less. Project abstracts should be —

- Written for a general public audience.
- Submitted as a separate attachment with “Project Abstract” as part of its file name.
- Single-spaced, using a standard 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins.

The project abstract is an important part of the application and serves as an introduction to the proposed project. If the application is funded, the project abstract typically will become public information and be used to describe the project.

As a separate attachment, the project abstract will **not** count against the page limit for the program narrative.

3. Program Narrative

The Program Narrative must respond to the solicitation (see Program-specific Information on pages 5-7) and the Review Criteria (see pages 15-19) in the order given. The Program Narrative should be double-spaced, use a standard 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins, and not exceed 12 pages. Number pages “1 of 12,” “2 of 12,” etc. Charts and graphs may be included in the narrative, and may be single-spaced and feature smaller fonts as necessary to present the included data.

If the program narrative fails to comply with these length restrictions, BJA may negatively consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The main body of the program narrative should describe the proposed project in depth. Within its sections (specified below), the main body of the program narrative should address:

- Explain the criminal justice significance of the proposed project.
- Explain how the application will strengthen the ME/C system and improve ME/C services.

The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative:

- a. Statement of the Problem
- b. Project Design and Implementation, including clearly identified goals and deliverables (refer to page 5).
- c. Capabilities and Competencies
- d. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures

OJP will require each successful applicant to submit regular performance data that demonstrate the results of the work carried out under the award (see "[General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements](#)" in Section F. Federal Award Administration Information). The performance data directly relate to the goals, objectives, and deliverables identified under "Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables" in [Section A. Program Description](#).

Applicants should visit OJP's performance measurement page at www.ojp.gov/performance for an overview of performance measurement activities at OJP.

Performance measures for this solicitation are listed in [Appendix A: Performance Measures Table](#).

The application should demonstrate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements for this grant program and detail how the applicant will gather the required data should it receive funding.

Please note that applicants are **not** required to submit performance data with the application. Performance measures information is included as an alert that successful applicants will be required to submit performance data as part of the reporting requirements under an award.

In addition to the performance metrics, awardees under [Purpose Area 1](#) will be required to provide to BJA details about the impact and progress of the fellowship program in a narrative report. The agency should include any details about the number of fellowship applications prior to implementing the BJA program and any changes noted in the number of fellowship applications received. Outreach efforts to increase the fellowship applicant pool as well as the results of these efforts should also be described.

Awardees under [Purpose Area 2](#) will be required to provide to BJA details about the impact and progress of the accreditation efforts in a narrative report in addition to the performance metrics. The report should include information on the level of effort provided towards accreditation processes and the progress made including the level of staffing and amount of

time provided. Successes and pitfalls as well as any information BJA can use towards the learning of ME/C accreditation processes, issues, and results should also be provided.

Award recipients will be required to provide the relevant data by submitting semi-annual performance metrics through semi-annual reports in GMS.

Note on Project Evaluations

An applicant that proposes to use award funds through this solicitation to conduct project evaluations should follow the guidance under Note on Project Evaluations in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Please see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the following:

4. [Budget Information and Associated Documentation](#) in the “Budget Preparation and Submission Information” section.
5. [Indirect Cost Rate Agreement](#)
6. [Tribal Authorizing Resolution](#) (if applicable)
7. [Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire \(including applicant disclosure of high-risk status\)](#)
8. [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities](#)
9. [Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications](#)
10. [Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees](#)¹¹ (if applicable)
11. [Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity](#)
12. [Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation](#)
13. **Additional Attachments**
 - a. **Documentation of Rural Challenges (if applicable)**

As is mentioned above, OJP will give priority consideration in award decisions to applications that address specific challenges that rural communities face. Each applicant proposing to receive priority consideration under the rural priority should provide a sufficient narrative to include what makes the geographic service area rural (using U.S. Census or other appropriate government data), how isolated the area is from needed services, and how it will address specific challenges in rural communities.
 - b. **Documentation of High-Poverty Areas or Persistent-Poverty Counties (if applicable)**

As mentioned above, OJP will give priority consideration in award decisions to applications that demonstrate that the individuals who will benefit from the requested grant reside in high-poverty areas or persistent-poverty counties as defined above. Each applicant proposing to receive consideration under the High-Poverty Areas or Persistent Poverty Counties priority should provide a sufficient narrative explanation to identify each specific High-Poverty Area (by census tract number(s)) and/or each

¹¹ A “DOJ High Risk Grantee” is a recipient that has received a DOJ High-Risk designation based on a documented history of unsatisfactory performance, financial instability, management system or other internal control deficiencies, or noncompliance with award terms and conditions on prior awards, or that is otherwise not responsible.

specific Persistent-Poverty County where individuals are intended to benefit from the requested grant and how the requested grant will address specific challenges in each such identified area and/or county.

c. Documentation of Enhanced Public Safety in Qualified Opportunity Zones (if applicable)

As is mentioned above, OJP will give priority consideration in award decisions to designated Qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZs). Each applicant proposing to receive priority consideration under the under the Qualified Opportunity Zones priority should provide a sufficient narrative explanation in order for OJP to identify clearly the public safety benefit the applicant anticipates that its project will have on a specified QOZ(s). The narrative and the list of affected QOZs (by census tract number) must be included as an attachment that is clearly labeled as addressing QOZs. The applicant may also include tables, charts, graphs, or other relevant illustrations that may be useful in comprehending the manner in which the proposed project is anticipated to benefit a QOZ(s).

d. Accreditation Documentation - For [Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships](#) (If Applicable)

- Acceptable types of documentation of current accreditation include: an electronic (scanned) copy of the current accreditation certificate(s), a digital photograph of the current accreditation certificate(s), or a letter from the accrediting body that includes the certificate number.
- Additionally, if a certificate references another document that contains key information on the type or scope of the accreditation, provide a copy of that supplemental documentation. Independent accrediting or certifying organizations may include the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education or other appropriate accrediting bodies.

e. Accreditation Documentation - For [Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation](#) (if applicable)

- Acceptable types of documentation of current accreditation include: an electronic (scanned) copy of the current accreditation certificate(s), a digital photograph of the current accreditation certificate(s), or a letter from the accrediting body that includes the certificate number.
- Additionally, if a certificate references another document that contains key information on the type or scope of the accreditation, provide a copy of that supplemental documentation. Independent accrediting or certifying organizations may include the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) and the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (IACME), or other appropriate accrediting bodies.
- Note: If the office is not currently accredited, applicants may provide supporting documentation that demonstrate activities seeking achievement of accreditation.

f. List of Key Personnel

- Organizational Chart - Of the applicant agency and all proposed collaborators involved in the project. Include project-related staffing plans and narratives for each organizational chart, proposed new hires, and any anticipated staffing changes

related to the Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program funding if received.

- Position Descriptions and Résumés - Curriculum vitae, resumes, or biographical sketches for key personnel. Attach this as a separate PDF file titled “Curriculum Vitae or Resumes.”
- List (to the extent known) of All Proposed Project Staff Members - Including those affiliated with the applicant organization or any proposed subrecipient organization(s), any proposed consultant(s) and contractors (whether individuals or organizations), and any proposed members of an advisory board for the project (if applicable). The list should include, for each individual and organization: name, title (if applicable), employer or other organizational affiliation, and roles and responsibilities proposed for the project. Attach this as a separate PDF file titled “Proposed Project Staff.”

g. Timeline

Proposed project timeline and expected milestones. Attach this as a separate PDF file titled “Project Timeline.”

h. Letters of Commitment

Letters of commitment or cooperation/support or administrative agreements from organizations collaborating in the project (if applicable). Attach this as a separate PDF file titled “Letters of Commitment.”

i. Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist – National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Each applicant is to submit a BJA Programmatic Coversheet and Checklist with its application to assist BJA in assessing the potential environmental impacts of the activities proposed for funding by the applicant. Specifically, the applicant is expected to:

- Carefully read the [Programmatic Environmental Assessment](#).
- Complete the [Cover Sheet and the attached the Programmatic Checklist](#).
- Attach the completed documents to the grant application.

The applicant should also submit a Cover Sheet and BJA Programmatic Checklist for any organization identified in the Budget Detail Worksheet that will receive grant funds through a sub-award or procurement contract to perform any of the following activities: new construction or renovations that change the basic prior use of a facility or significantly change the size; research and/or technology development that could be expected to have an effect on the environment; or implementation of programs involving the use of chemicals. For more information about NEPA and BJA’s NEPA Process, please go to <https://bja.ojp.gov/national-environmental-policy-act-nepa-guidance>.

How To Apply (Grants.gov)

Applicants must register in and submit applications through [Grants.gov](#), a primary source to find federal funding opportunities and apply for funding. Find information on how to apply in response to this solicitation in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Registration and Submission Steps

Applicants will need the following identifying information when searching for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov.

- CFDA# 16.037

This solicitation contains multiple purpose areas, denoted by the individual Competition ID. Select the appropriate Competition ID for the intended purpose area of the application.

- BJA-2020-18436 Forensic Pathology Fellowships
- BJA-2020-18437 Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation

For information on each registration and submission step, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

E. Application Review Information

Review Criteria

Applications that meet basic minimum requirements will be evaluated by peer reviewers using the following review criteria.

Review Criteria for [Purpose Area 1 – Forensic Pathology Fellowships](#):

1. Statement of the Problem (Understanding of the problem and its importance) — 15 percent
 - a. Demonstrated understanding of the problem that exists in the ME/C system in the United States
 - b. Demonstrated awareness of the current state of ME/C issues
 - c. Impact of funding on the ME/C system and ME/C services in the United States
2. Project Design and Implementation (Quality and technical merit) — 15 percent
 - a. Awareness of the state of ME/C system and ME/C services in the United States. Soundness of methods and approach to addressing the stated objectives of the proposed project. The overall strategy should be well reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the goals of the project.
 - b. Feasibility of proposed project.
 - c. Awareness of pitfalls of the proposed project design and actions to minimize and/or mitigate them.
 - d. Innovation and creativity (when appropriate).
3. Expected Outcomes/Potential Impact — 30 percent

- a. Description of the expected outcome(s) of the project. Anticipated forensic pathology fellowships to be completed and anticipated forensic pathology fellowship processes to be initiated and/or assisted through the program.
- b. Potential for significantly improved understanding of the stated problem. If the goals of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or MDI practice in the criminal justice system be improved?
- c. What is the likelihood that the project will exert a sustained, powerful influence on the MDI-ME/C field(s) as related to criminal justice?
- d. Potential for innovative solution to address (all or a significant part of) the stated criminal/justice problem. How will successful completion of the project change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, or services that drive MDI as it relates to criminal justice? How will a successful project address the identified ME/C problem and associated critical barriers to progress?
- e. Potential to increase the awareness of best practices for the ME/C community.

4. Capabilities and Competencies — 15 percent

- a. Qualifications and experience of proposed project staff (including all individuals and organizations identified in the application who will be significantly involved in substantive aspects of the proposal).
- b. Demonstrated ability of the applicant organization to manage the effort.
- c. Relationship between the capabilities/competencies of the proposed project staff (including the applicant organization) and the scope of the proposed project.
- d. Strength of the environment (e.g., institutional and jurisdictional support, equipment and other physical resources, or collaborative arrangements) in which the work will be done and its contribution to the probability of success. Does the program meet or exceed ACGME-accredited forensic pathology fellowship requirements?
- e. Affordability and cost-effectiveness of proposed approach.

5. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures — 15 percent

- a. Demonstrated plan for collection of the performance measure data as described in the solicitation.

6. Budget — 10 percent: Complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities). Budget narratives should demonstrate generally how

applicants will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures. Budget narratives should demonstrate cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project.¹²

- a. Total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit (cost effectiveness).
- b. Appropriateness of the budget relative to the level of effort.
- c. Use of existing resources to conserve costs.
- d. Proposed budget alignment with proposed project activities.

Review Criteria for [Purpose Area 2 – Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation](#)

1. Statement of the Problem (Understanding of the problem and its importance) — 15 percent

- a. Demonstrated understanding of the problem that exists in the ME/C system in the United States.
- b. Demonstrated awareness of the current state of ME/C issues.
- c. Impact of funding ME/C accreditation activities on the ME/C system and ME/C services in the United States.

2. Project Design and Implementation (Quality and technical merit) — 15 percent

- a. Awareness of the state of ME/C accreditation on the ME/C system and ME/C services in the United States.
- b. Soundness of methods and approach to addressing the stated objectives of the proposed project. The overall strategy should be well reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the goals of the project.
- c. Feasibility of proposed project.
- d. Awareness of pitfalls of the proposed project design and actions to minimize and/or mitigate them.
- e. Innovation and creativity (when appropriate).

3. Expected Outcomes/Potential Impact — 30 percent

- a. Description of the expected outcome(s) of the project. Anticipated accreditation processes to be completed and anticipated accreditation processes to be initiated or assisted through the program.

¹² Generally speaking, a reasonable cost is a cost that, in its nature or amount, does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs.

- b. Potential for significantly improved understanding of the stated problem. If the goals of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or MDI practice be improved?
- c. What is the likelihood that the project will exert a sustained, powerful influence on the MDI field(s) as related to criminal justice?
- d. Potential for innovative solution to address (all or a significant part of) the stated criminal justice problem. How will successful completion change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, or services that drive MDI as it relates to criminal justice? How will a successful project address the identified ME/C problem and associated critical barriers to progress?
- e. Potential to increase the awareness of best practices for the ME/C community.
- f. Potential to improve the understanding of scientific rationale underpinning existing ME/C practices.
- g. Potential for innovative protocols to increase the efficiency, accuracy, reliability or cost- effectiveness of medicolegal death investigations.

4. Capabilities and Competencies — 15 percent

- a. Qualifications and experience of proposed project staff (including all individuals and organizations identified in the application who will be significantly involved in substantive aspects of the proposal).
- b. Demonstrated ability of the applicant organization to manage the effort.
- c. Relationship between the capabilities/competencies of the proposed project staff (including the applicant organization) and the scope of the proposed project.
- d. Strength of the environment (e.g., institutional and jurisdictional support, equipment and other physical resources, or collaborative arrangements) in which the work will be done and its contribution to the probability of success.
- e. Affordability and cost-effectiveness of proposed approach.

5. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures — 15 percent

- a. Demonstrated plan for collection of the performance measure data as described in the solicitation.

6. Budget — 10%: Complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities). Budget narratives should demonstrate generally how applicants

will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures. Budget narratives should demonstrate cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project.¹³

- a. Total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit (cost effectiveness).
- b. Appropriateness of the budget relative to the level of effort.
- c. Use of existing resources to conserve costs.
- d. Proposed budget alignment with proposed project activities.

Review Process

BJA reviews the application to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, achievable, and consistent with the solicitation.

The following five paragraphs in this solicitation expressly modify the “Application Review Information” provisions in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide. An applicant is to follow the guidance in these five paragraphs instead of the guidance stated under the “Application Review Information” heading in the Guide.

Peer reviewers will review the applications submitted under this solicitation that meet basic minimum requirements. For purposes of assessing whether an application meets basic minimum requirements and should proceed to further consideration, OJP screens applications for compliance with those requirements. Although specific requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all solicitations for funding under OJP programs:

- 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.

For a list of the application elements that **MUST** be included in the application submission in order for an application to meet the basic minimum requirements, see [“What an Application Should Include”](#) under [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

Peer review panels will evaluate, score, and rate applications that meet basic minimum requirements. BJA may use internal peer reviewers, external peer reviewers, or a combination, to assess applications on technical merit using the solicitation’s review criteria. An external peer reviewer is an expert in the subject matter of a given solicitation who is not a current DOJ employee. An internal reviewer is a current DOJ employee who is well-versed or has expertise in the subject matter of this solicitation. Peer reviewers’ ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only, but views are considered carefully.

¹³ Generally speaking, a reasonable cost is a cost that, in its nature or amount, does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs.

Other important considerations for BJA include geographic diversity, strategic priorities (specifically including, but not limited to, those mentioned above relating to addressing specific challenges that rural communities face, high-poverty areas or persistent-poverty counties, demonstrable potential enhancement to public safety in one or more federally designated Qualified Opportunity Zones), available funding, and the extent to which the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative accurately explain project costs that are reasonable, necessary, and otherwise allowable under federal law and applicable federal cost principles.

Pursuant to the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, before award decisions are made, OJP also reviews information related to the degree of risk posed by the applicant. Among other things to help assess whether an applicant that has one or more prior federal awards has a satisfactory record with respect to performance, integrity, and business ethics, OJP checks whether the applicant is listed in SAM as excluded from receiving a federal award.

In addition, if OJP anticipates that an award will exceed \$250,000 in federal funds, OJP also must review and consider any information about the applicant that appears in the non-public segment of the integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently, the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System, FAPIIS).

Important note on FAPIIS: An applicant, at its option, may review and comment on any information about itself that currently appears in FAPIIS and was entered by a federal awarding agency. OJP will consider any such comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in its assessment of the risk posed by the applicant.

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, the Assistant Attorney General will make all final award decisions and may take into account not only peer review ratings and BJA recommendations, but also other factors as indicated in this section.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

Please see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the following:

[Federal Award Notices](#)

[Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements](#)

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the OJP-approved application, the recipient must comply with all award conditions, and all applicable requirements of federal statutes and regulations (including applicable requirements referred to in the assurances and certifications executed in connection with award acceptance).

For additional information on these legal requirements, see the “Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

[Information Technology \(IT\) Security Clauses](#)

General Information about [Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements](#)

In addition to the deliverables described in [Section A. Program Description](#), any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be required to submit certain reports and data.

Required reports. Recipients typically must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, final financial and progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements or specific award conditions. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent. (In appropriate cases, OJP may require additional reports.)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on specific post-award reporting requirements, including performance measures data.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

For questions directed to the Federal Awarding Agency, see NCJRS contact information on page 2.

For contact information for Grants.gov, see page 2.

H. Other Information

Please see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the following:

[Freedom of Information and Privacy Act \(5 U.S.C. 552 and 5 U.S.C. 552a\)](#)

[Provide Feedback to OJP](#)

Appendix A: Performance Measures Table

Performance Measures for [Purpose Area 1: BJA Forensic Pathology Fellowships](#)

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Data Recipient Provides
<p>Increase the capacity of ME/C services through the addition of qualified forensic pathologists.</p>	<p>The number of forensic pathology fellowship participants who completed fellowship training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of participants who completed forensic pathology fellowship training under the Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program. • The number of forensic pathology fellowship participants funded through BJA's Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program. • The number of overall forensic pathology fellowship participants.
	<p>Percentage of death investigations performed by forensic pathology fellows through Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of deaths investigated by ME/C office 6 months prior to award start date. • Total number of deaths investigated by ME/C office during each reporting period. • Total number of deaths investigated by BJA-funded forensic pathology fellow(s) during the reporting period. • Total number of deaths investigated by ME/C office during entire project. • Total number of deaths investigated by BJA-funded forensic pathology fellow during the entire project.
	<p>Percentage of autopsies performed by forensic pathology fellows through Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of autopsies performed by ME/C office during the 6-month period prior to the award start date. • Total number of autopsies performed by ME/C office during each reporting period. • Total number of autopsies performed by BJA-funded forensic pathology fellow(s) during each reporting period • Total number of autopsies performed by ME/C office during entire project. • Total number of autopsies performed by BJA-funded forensic pathology fellow(s) during the entire project.

Performance Measures for Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Data Recipient Provides
Increase the quality of ME/C services in the United States through accreditation and certification.	Provide accreditation documentation that meets expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accreditation documentation for each agency/organization that applied from appropriate accrediting body.
	Percent increase in the number of certified individuals in ME/C agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of individuals at ME/C agency or organization in medicolegal death investigation supporting positions. • Number of certified individuals at ME/C agency or organization in medicolegal death investigation supporting positions. • Number of individuals seeking certification with Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program funding. • Number of individuals who achieved certification with Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program funding during the project period.
	Percent decrease in death investigation cases backlog.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of deaths investigated 6 months prior to award start date. • Number of deaths investigated during the reporting period. • Total number of deaths investigated during the entire project. • Average number of days to produce a final death investigation report prior to award start date. • Average number of days to produce a final death investigation report during each reporting period. • Average number of days to produce a final death investigation report at the end of the project period.

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Data Recipient Provides
	Percent decrease in autopsy cases backlog.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of autopsies performed during the 6-month period prior to the award start date. • Number of autopsies performed during each reporting period. • Total number of autopsies performed during the entire project. • Average number of days to produce a final autopsy report prior to award start date. • Average number of days to produce a final autopsy report during each reporting period. • Average number of days to produce a final autopsy report at the end of the project period.

Appendix B: Application Checklist

Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program, Fiscal Year 2020

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 [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

To Register with Grants.gov:

- Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

To Find Funding Opportunity:

- Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Select the correct Competition ID (see page 15)
- Access Funding Opportunity and Application Package (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) (optional) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)
- Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at [ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm](#) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

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 [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

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

- Contact BJA regarding experiencing technical difficulties (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements:

- Review the ["Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2020 Awards"](#) in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

Scope Requirement:

- The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s) of each Purpose Area.

Eligibility Requirement: For eligibility information, see title page.

What an Application Should Include:

The following items are critical application elements required to pass Basic Minimum Requirements (BMR) Review. An application that OJP determines does not include the application elements that must be included in the application submission in order for the application to meet the basic minimum requirements, will neither proceed to peer review, nor receive further consideration.

- Program Narrative (see page 10)
 - Budget Detail Worksheet (including Budget Narrative) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
-
- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
 - Project Abstract (see page 10)
 - Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
 - Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
 - Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
 - [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(SF-LLL\)](#) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
 - Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
 - Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
 - Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
 - Disclosure of Process related to Executive Compensation (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Additional Attachments:

- Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Documentation of rural challenges (if applicable) (see page 12)
- Documentation of high-poverty areas or persistent poverty counties (if applicable) (see page 12)

- Documentation of enhanced public safety in federally designated Qualified Opportunity Zones (if applicable) (see page 13)
- Accreditation Documentation – For Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships (if applicable) (see page 13)
- Accreditation Documentation – For Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation (if applicable) (see page 13)
- List of Key Personnel (see page 13)
- Timeline (see page 14)
- Letters of Commitment (see page 14)
- Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist – National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (see page 14)