

DARYL FOX: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to today's webinar, FY 2021 Smart Policing Initiative Grant Program, hosted by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. At this time, I'd like to introduce today's presenter, Kate McNamee, Senior Policy Advisor of Law Enforcement with the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Kate?

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Good everyone, everybody, and welcome to our webinar focused on the 2021 Smart Policing Competitive Grant Program. My name is Kate McNamee as Daryl mentioned, and I have oversight of BJA over SPI, and I'm pleased to be with all of you today. And big thanks to Daryl and the Leidos team for supporting this webinar today, as well as my colleagues, Will Bronson and Geislia Barnes, for joining me today from the BJA Policy Office, or excuse me, Programs Office. As an overview of today's webinar, we will be talking about what SPI is and what it has achieved from the policing field, who is eligible to apply, and what activities and purchases funds can support, where we are focusing the solicitation's purpose areas in 2021, what a competitive application demonstrates, OJP's priority areas for this year, important steps in the application process given that there is a new application system at the Office of Justice Programs, and where applicants can seek out assistance. And I'll then open the webinar up for Q&A.

The SPI program has existed since 2009, and its goal has been to support law enforcement's efforts to identify and test innovative and evidence-based solutions to the most pressing policing challenges and crime problems. Over the last decade, we have increased law enforcement agencies' use of innovative technology, intelligence and data. We have encouraged collaboration among key crime reduction partners, and promoted evidence-based practices and encouraged sustainable partnerships between police and researchers. And by injecting science into policing practice, SPI benefits both the individual jurisdiction's work and capacity to fight violent crime and improve community relations, and also provide the policing field with the information on what works in crime reduction. Thus far, we have supported 73 law enforcement agencies as they change the way they do business. The simple way we do this is to competitively award funding to support initiatives that improve law enforcement agencies' crime fighting and community engagement capacities. Under SPI, which is released as a solicitation annually, jurisdictions compete to receive funding for a three-year initiative.

The proposed project must target a pressing operational, technology implementation, or crime reduction issue for intervention or implementation. Sites must partner with researchers to evaluate their progress and results. And in terms of what types of initiative SPI supports, it is a very broad portfolio, with police departments addressing issues related to crime reduction, technology implementation, crime analysis, capacity building, addressing dangerous people and places, and innovative approaches to individual's mental health or substance use crisis. After receiving an SPI award, SPI sites have access to intensive to--creating a technical assistance, and that has been a key to SPI's success. And you can learn more at [smart-policing.com](http://smart-policing.com).

Here is a sampling of what SPI has enabled local jurisdictions to accomplish. In Boston, the SPI project resulted in a significant increase in its homicide clearance rate. In Los

Angeles, Operation LASER was associated with a 56% decrease in homicide in the selected target area. LAPD has since increased its use of the SPI approach. To reduce homicide and nonfatal shootings throughout the city, it received another SPI award to experiment with machine learning in homicide clearance data. Rochester, New York's SPI project resulted in the development and validation of a risk assessment tool to predict retaliatory gun violence disputes. The project is associated with the extent of the crime in aggravated assault and murder--and murder in the city that still continues. Kansas City, Missouri, their first SPI-supported project focused on--focused deterrence and it was associated with a 40% decrease in homicide and 19% decrease in gun assaults. In Commerce City, Colorado, the SPI supported a Sexual Assault Task Force and enabled them to manage a 46% increase in sexual assault investigations, and they received an award for their efforts. These examples are meant to illustrate the diversity and complexity of the work underway in SPI. Equally importantly, it also shows the importance of evaluating each site's implementation and outcome of their SPI intervention so successful approaches can be promoted to the policing field generally.

Who is an eligible applicant? Well, we are very broad here. State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies, first and foremost; police departments; sheriff's agencies; governmental non-law enforcement agencies who act as a fiscal agent for a specific law enforcement agency. It now includes state universities acting on behalf of their university police department, as long as it's a state institution; tribal governments that perform law enforcement functions; as well as tribal consortia. Two or more entities absolutely can be involved in a project. We actually are very fond of partnerships under SPI, but only one can serve as the lead applicant. And of course, this is BJA-wide, but all recipients and subrecipients must forgo any profit or management fee. Common and allowable costs that can be supported with SPI funds are new personnel; overtime support; technology, both hardware and software; data analysis support, which includes the research partnership; a professional evaluator; and crime analysis support. Grant amounts are capped at \$500,000 for each award, regardless of the Purpose Area you apply to.

Research partnerships have proven to be crucial to ensuring that SPI project outcomes are validly measured and let us know what works and should be shared as a promising practice. The solicitation for 2021 requires each project to devote 20% of the budget to supporting the work of the evaluator or research partner. We have found that any less than that and the research is not adequately funded. We are interested in both implementation and outcome data, as both help us educate the field, and not only what new practices to adopt, but how they should adopt them. And ultimately, SPI is a two-way street as individual sites are able to get resources to try new approaches and change the way they do business, and we get to learn from you and share the lessons with the field. We are often asked about who or what a research partner is. It can be someone from a university, a nonprofit, a private entity, or a government organization. It should be an individual with past experience working with public agencies, especially criminal justice agencies, using action research; broad experience and familiarity with methodologies, using program evaluation and criminal justice research; and several years of evaluation research experience.

There are two separate Purpose Areas in this year's solicitation. The first supports projects that implement innovative approaches to crime reduction or a police operation, while Purpose Area 2 supports technology-driven initiatives that promote public safety and address a particular crime or operational issue in the applicant jurisdiction. You absolutely may apply to both, but they should be different projects. Purpose Area 1 is focused on innovative and evidence-based policing practices. I would highly recommend visiting [smart-policing.com](http://smart-policing.com) and take a look at the projects highlighted there. In particular, the projects in Los Angeles; Tempe, Arizona; Detroit; Chicago; Portland, Oregon; and Brooklyn Park, Minnesota may prove to be very interesting to prospective applicants. These illustrate the breadths of crime issues and organizational challenges SPI has helped police agencies tackle.

The following areas were identified as having particular urgency or interest in the policing world, and we have an interest in exploring how police agencies can reduce disparities in services and support to historically marginalized communities; partnerships among mental health, substance use, social workers, and disability advocates with police that increase officer and public safety; new approaches to crisis response; and initiatives that increase law enforcement's ability to successfully investigate shootings and gun assaults that are driving violence in a given community, as well as to more fruitfully engage survivors and witnesses.

Purpose Area 2 is focused on technology or information-sharing solutions that help agencies address a specific operational issue or type of crime. I would advise looking at projects previously funded under this Purpose Area at [smart-policing.com](http://smart-policing.com), specifically see projects funded in Houston, Texas; Washington, DC; Roanoke, Virginia; Salisbury, North Carolina; and Anniston, Alabama. Excuse me. BJA has identified areas of particular interest for Purpose Area 2 as well. They include projects that examine social network or geospatial analysis approach or application to violent crime reduction and community trust building; activities that support the implementation of community violence intervention strategies, and I will talk more about this concept in a bit; implementation of the Cardiff Violence Prevention Model; the development of real-time crime centers in communities with high rates of violence and gun crime; the testing and expansion of the use of ViCAP by state and local law enforcement; and the development and testing of web-based dashboards meant to increase agency transparency to the public.

Since SPI is a well-established program over the past almost two decades, we've identified specific elements or themes that are key to successful projects. Strong support from the chief of the department who is willing to message the SPI--the SPI project as a high priority; a clear evidence-based plan to examine the drivers of crime problems or organizational challenges, and base the intervention on the findings of that analysis; a willingness to change standard operating procedures and other business practices and be open to opportunities for improvement; and the commitment to keeping up the work after the grant ends, so that successful approaches remain in place and continue to benefit the agency and the community.

So in FY 2021, OJP will give priority consideration in award decisions--excuse me, priority considerations of applications that support the implementation of Community Violence Intervention strategies, or CVI strategies. These are strategies that identify high-risk individuals and focus community-based interventions and assistance on those individuals to prevent further violence, further criminal behavior, and improved outcomes for those people in those communities. There is guidance as to--as to specific narratives that should be attached to your application in the solicitation to document the project's support or use of CVI. Jurisdictions experiencing high levels of poverty may also receive priority consideration in FY 21.

SPI projects are complex, so we allot 36 months for implementation and evaluation, and up to \$500,000 to support each site's work. Evidence-based practice is often a buzzword, but it is very real and tangible to us. And that is what we are looking to support under SPI. You must back up your proposed projects with data-based reasoning and approaches. There's no match for this program, and they are--will be awarded as grants, and the start date will be October 1, 2021 or later. And of particular importance, there will be a two-stage application process this year. This year, we have the new Grants Management System, and a new two-step grant application process to go along with it. This means that you have two deadlines to keep in mind. The first is the Grants.gov deadline to submit your SF-424 and lobbying disclosure form. The second, applicants submit their full application into the JustGrants system. Both of these steps are required, and there's further guidance available in the solicitation on the exact process. Please review the DOJ Application Submission Checklist, which covers all the steps you have to take to complete your submission process.

Now, these are important dates to remember. We released the solicitation on May 19, and the Grants.gov deadline for your SF-424 and lobbying disclosure is July 6. The JustGrants submission deadline for your full application and attachments is July 20, 2021. There will be no exceptions given if you miss the Grants.gov deadline, so my best advice to you, if you plan to apply, to do that as soon as possible, that first part. JustGrants, I realize many of you are new to the system, and the intent of JustGrants launched last October was to streamline the grant award and management process. And it was also intended to enable users to have new ways to manage their information in the system. An important enhancement is the ability to use a web-based budget detail worksheet that establishes a shared structure and narrative for all DOJ grant programs. And a streamlined validation project will hopefully help us clear budgets more quickly.

Now optimally this is how it is supposed to go, but new systems have challenges and should you run into any trouble, there is support available in the way of tutorials, background materials to enhance your interface with JustGrants. And this is a link to those resources. JustGrants requires that you submit a web-based budget form. And as I've previously mentioned, this is new this year, and the direct cost rate agreement should be an attachment. Also you're required the financial management questionnaire and the executive compensation disclosure. Training is available on all of this--on the JustGrants page. We are maintaining ongoing support to applicants by the OJP Response Center. And here is their contact information.

If you run into any technical difficulties with your submission, please let the Response Center know immediately so that can be documented. And also subscribe to receive information related to new funding opportunities and other helpful resources as they're released. And here we listed some resources that should prove useful as you put your applications together. Here is my contact information should it be needed, best by email at Catherine.McNamee@usdoj.gov. And here's all the ways that you can stay connected with us and we truly hope that you do, as well as--next slide, key contacts for your application submission process. Now I will turn it back to Daryl for Q&A. What do we have, Daryl?

DARYL FOX: Thanks, Kate. A couple coming in now. Just a reminder to those that do have questions or want to submit, please go to the bottom right hand side of your screen, click the three dots, and you can enter your question in the Q&A icon there. "If your agency has never worked with a researcher in the past, do you have recommendation on the best way to start this process or where to turn?"

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Uh-hmm. Yes, we have a lot of materials available to our Innovations Suite program that talks about the ways that you can find a research partner, what to look for in a research partner. We can try to get those links and send them out following the webinar. But this is something that we've developed a lot of materials on. One of the best resources for you is probably your local university or college. Most of them have, you know, if not a criminal justice section then a sociology section that might have professors very interested in collaborating, you know, with police departments, especially now under the current environment. So that would be my advisement of your first step, but definitely take a look at the Innovations Suite guidance that we have on establishing research partnerships.

DARYL FOX: "Can the 20% for the evaluation also support police department personnel and analysts or assisting with the evaluation, or is it restricted to funding the only research partner directly?"

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: I think there's some wiggle room on that if you can demonstrate that the personnel will be spending a defined amount of time supporting the evaluation efforts, then I think there, you know, you may be in a safe territory there. But that would be on a case-by-case basis.

DARYL FOX: Another question came in about the slides. And to everybody on the call, the PowerPoint, transcript, and recording from today will be posted to the BJA website within about five to ten business days. So yes, you can go back and take a look at these--the slide, this presentation as you need for any information. That's all that's in the queue at this time. We can hang on for a moment. Anybody else has a question, please enter it in. Kate will be able to certainly answer it for you. The slide here just for reference to, as Kate mentioned, anything technical assistance related to Grants.gov, information is listed. JustGrants, the new process for the full application, you can contact them here at this number and email, and then anything programmatically, the Response Center is a

wonderful resource, very responsive. So you can give them a call or an email. That seems to be it at this time, Kate.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Okay.

DARYL FOX: Oh, here's one that came in. "Can applicants propose projects or programs that have been implemented in other cities?"

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Yes, yes. We are very interested in issues and projects that commonly are faced by police departments. Replication of previously instituted projects at other organizations is fine. We have done that quite a bit. I would just advise in order to be competitive, that you advise how this will provide new information to the policing field.

DARYL FOX: That's all that's in the queue at this time.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Well give it another 30 seconds.

DARYL FOX: Uh-hmm. While we're here, I'll also put up the Stay Connected slide for those that want to get email updates. You can do text to subscribe, social media links here, also BJA's website. All great information and links for you to reference.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Yeah, and I know I said this a couple times in the webinar, but smart-policing.com, highly recommend you go through that. There are lots of publications in there that describe what our past research partnerships have looked like in the evaluations that have come out of SPI projects. It'll give you a real feel for what the portfolio is trying to do and where we try to focus. And we do, you know, I want to be also very clear that there's like a common fear that if you're not a huge police department with a high, high crime rate, or what have you, that you won't be as competitive for an SPI program award. That is not true. We try very hard to have diversity not only in subject matter in SPI, but also the types of organizations that we include as SPI organizations, sheriff's departments, state police, you know, police departments of all sizes have participated. So I just wanted to put that out there in case that is a concern.

DARYL FOX: "If the researcher is internal, can overtime be paid to that person to conduct the research?"

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Our first concern is that the research partner be qualified. And so if you can demonstrate that that person is qualified to be the research partner to perform the evaluation as you present it, then I think that that is fine. Can overtime be paid to that person to do the research? Technically, yes, but we also look for feasibility in SPI projects, we look at that very closely. And I know that I would be concerned about this being relegated to overtime rather than a primary responsibility of the individual charged with the research evaluation work, because it really should--to be done right, it's going to take a lot of their time.

DARYL FOX: "Is there recommendation on if the funds can be or should be allocated to technology procurement or implementation?"

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: It can be, absolutely. We have current projects that are in the process of procuring new technology.

DARYL FOX: And, actually, in more detail, I read it wrong, Kate. How much is their recommendation?

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Okay.

DARYL FOX: How much. Uh-hmm.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Oh, okay. We don't have a cap necessarily beyond ensuring that you have resources reserved for all aspects of your project that need to be supported, such as the research partnership and personnel. So there's no specific cap on procurement but, you know, of course, we do expect you to abide by, you know, the limits that are in place for your organization and any sole source requirements that we have on the BJA end. And Geislia and Will, if you--if you have anything to add to that particular response, please just let me know.

GEISLIA BARNES: Kate, I think--this is Geislia. I think your response is correct. When--anything with overtime, we will really scrutinize and look at it. So, I believe your response is sufficient for now. Like you said, it is a case-by-case basis.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Uh-hmm. Thank you.

WILLIE BRONSON: This is Will, totally agree. Great job, Kate, as always.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Thanks, Will.

DARYL FOX: There's a couple people asking about the Innovations Suite and where they can find that.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Uh-hmm. We will send that out. I can try. If we're going to wait a couple seconds for any additional questions, I can do a quick Google.

DARYL FOX: And then I can ask another one while you're searching that.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Uh-hmm.

DARYL FOX: "Is there a place or process for entities interested in assisting as a research partner to connect with agencies having difficulty identifying one?"

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Hmm. I know that George Mason Center for Evidence-Based Practices maintains a list for a long time of folks that are interested in becoming research

partners. I would highly recommend--just reach out to me. I would welcome email or phone call from you if you're interested in being connected with a police agency who's looking for a research partner, I'd be happy for that role.

GEISLIA BARNES: Hey, Kate, this is Geislia. Is it safe to reassure the grantees if they do not have a research partner per se at this moment, but they still want to apply, they should still go ahead and apply and we can work on funding the research part--partner if they're actually awarded? I guess I just want to keep--don't want anyone to get discouraged from applying even though they may at not--at this time have identified a research partner.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: They can certainly apply and put that in as a TBD personnel-wise in their application and put it as, you know, a placeholder in their budget. But, you know, they will be evaluated again on the feasibility of their project.

GEISLIA BARNES: Uh-hmm.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: And so not having that in place going in may negatively affect that score.

GEISLIA BARNES: Okay.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Uh-hmm.

DARYL FOX: Kate, we could always--we can make a formal kind of email and send it out to today's attendees with that link.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Yeah.

DARYL FOX: And then you can see what to include if we need to.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Uh-hmm. That sounds good.

DARYL FOX: Another one came in. "Would funding a social worker paired with an officer to address crime associated with homelessness meet with what BJA is looking for in this program in the underserved community area?"

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Certainly. And I would advise that you go on [smart-policing.com](http://smart-policing.com) and look at the work that took place in Sacramento where we focused on that exact issue.

DARYL FOX: That's all that's in the queue at this time.

CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Give it 30 more seconds.

DARYL FOX: Any other questions from those attending, please go ahead and enter that in the Q&A to answer it. I think that may be it for today.



CATHERINE MCNAMEE: Okay. Well, thank you, everyone, for participating. I look forward to reading all of your applications. And best of luck in the process. And I know that you've had a big drink from my fire hose today as far as information and resources. But please do reach out if you have any questions, especially to the OJP Response Center. And I'd like to thank Geislia and Will, my colleagues from the program's office, for joining today. And also Daryl and his team at Leidos for making today possible. Thank you. Thank you all.

DARYL FOX: Okay. So on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Assistance and our panelists, we want to thank you for joining today's webinar. This will end today's presentation.