

DARYL FOX: Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to today's webinar, "Federal Funding Process, First Steps to Applying, How to Prepare Now, and Other Considerations," hosted by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. At this time, it's my pleasure to introduce Elizabeth Wolfe, special assistant to the BJA director, within BJA to begin the presentation. Elizabeth, your line's muted, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: Technical issues here. And it's all Elizabeth. Good afternoon everybody. Thank you so much for joining us today for this webinar. I'm excited to be here with Sunny Schnitzer and Lisa Hartman, and we are going to walk you through everything that you need to know to prepare yourself for submitting an application at BJA.

We're going to be going over a couple of things with you. We're going to talk about BJA, OJP, as well as the solicitations that we'll be offering. We'll also give you pointers on understanding parts of the solicitation, how to plan and organize, how you will write your application up and submit it. We also have Lisa Hartman going through JustGrants and using that system, and then give an opportunity for questions and answers.

So, what is the Office of Justice Programs? Well, we are made up of six offices. There's the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, the Office for Victims of Crime, as well as the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking, also known as SMART, which is a lot easier to say. OJP is one of three grant-making components of the Department of Justice. There's also the Office on Violence Against Women and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. The Office of Justice Programs supports communities and states through grant funding, training, research, technical assistance, and statistics to the criminal justice community.

So BJA, the director is Karhlton F. Moore. And the thing to really know about us, here's our mission statement, you can also find it online, is that in a nutshell, BJA's mission is to achieve safer communities. And how do we do that? Well, we do it through three ways. We do it through investments, through our grant making. We also do this through sharing of knowledge, which we provide through training and technical assistance to the field. And then lastly, we also do engagement, which I don't think people realize, but we spend a lot of time out in the field getting to know our constituents, participating in conferences and events, and hearing from people what the communities need.

So, in FY24, we are planning on releasing over 80 different solicitations. And these are just a couple of the ones that we are planning on doing. But you can see here there's a lot and they cover a number of topics. Just be aware that sometimes we frequently kind of update these and we get changes. Things will get canceled or new ones will be added. So don't assume this is a comprehensive list.

With available funding, there's two things that you need to know about our website where you can find information: there's current solicitations and then there's planned solicitations. The ones that are current are the ones that we actually have open right now. The ones that are planned solicitations tell you what you should be keeping a look out for in the future.

So the application life cycle. There's administrative preparation, which is where we plan out what we're going to be doing, and putting out into the field. You can find more information about that with the DOJ grant program plan. There's also an opportunity for you to go ahead and register with Grants.gov and JustGrants. And also to go to the Grants Learning Center, where you can learn more about grants. There's resources such as how to apply for grants, the budget, requirements, things like that so you can prepare yourself. These are all things you should be doing even before the solicitations are posted.

Once the solicitations are posted, there's an app. That's when the application period begins. There's going to be a deadline clearly listed for you to get everything done. And you can find these solicitations at ojp.gov, bja.gov, Grants.gov, JustGrants.gov. That's where all of these solicitations are posted. After you have submitted your application, we will go through a review process. So BJA will take a look and make sure that you've included everything that you need to have in that the application in order to be eligible for the solicitation. It'll go through a peer review process where we will have a panel review it and look at it for its merits. And then a programmatic review, which is an internal review at BJA, and a financial review. Once all this review has been done, and we have selected the awards that are going to be awarded for that year, we go ahead and we notify you of that. You should find out about it before September 30th. If your application was not selected, you will be notified by November 30th. And these emails are sent through AOR and the E-Biz email.

So with that, I want to jump right on in to understanding the parts of the solicitation. This is an example of the Solicitation Overview. It gives you information about what the purpose of the solicitation is. It's kind of like a brief description of it. And then you can actually click on it. You see that orange box that says download, kind of looks yellow,

orange, gold, that color. There's also, if you look on the far right side, it also talks about—you can go click and find other available funding, past funding, et cetera. So there's other resources there as well. You can click right here where it's a circle that says you can print the Solicitation Overview, so then you can have your own downloaded copy. And this gives you a sense of who can apply, why you should apply, the maximum amount available for this award. It's just a snapshot for you to essentially understand the solicitation and what's going to be required of you.

So, Understanding the Solicitation is why you should apply, which talks about, again, the purpose of it, what we're trying to achieve through this funding opportunity. And then the Eligibility section really gets into who may apply. And I want to tell you right upfront that you need to pay special attention to both of these. Because you want to make sure that you are spending time on something that is eligible for funding, that you're the correct organization type, and that even the project fits within what we're looking for.

Continuing on, another important, important thing that I can't stress enough is that there are two deadlines that you need to know. There's the Grants.gov deadline, which is typically one week before the close of the overall solicitation. And the second one is that JustGrants deadline. If you miss the Grants.gov, you will not be able to submit in JustGrants.

So, we do a lot of information about how to apply, answer questions that you may have about a particular solicitation. And this is where you will be able to participate in a funding webinar. And these funding webinars are for each of the solicitations we go through who it's about, eligibility, why we're doing it, our goals of the project, and answer your questions. That pre-application information session will be posted on our website, as well as you will see there in the solicitation itself. It'll give you information about that.

So, when you're doing your solicitation, things to be looking for is this, identify if you need project partners, and if so, we strongly, strongly underline, underline, suggest that you reach out to them as soon as possible. We want to have you make sure that you have letters of support. We want to make sure that you have MOUs set in place while in advance of when you need to submit it because that will get you held up. A key here is to look at the goals, objectives, deliverables, and timeline section of the form itself. And for example, if we're asking you to find project partners and that would strengthen your application, we will list for you the types of partners that you might want to be considering.

So, with that, I'm going to take a pause and I'm going to pass it on to my colleague, Sunny Schnitzer, who's going to talk about how you should plan, organize, and write your application. Sunny.

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: Thank you so much, Elizabeth. So I look forward to talking with you all today about going through the process of writing your application. Next slide.

So really today I want to take a little bit of time to offer some tips and tricks about how to plan out writing your application in response to one of the solicitations posted. So really I want to encourage everyone to spend some time planning and organizing your writing. But one really important factor that I want to flag is that applications for programs are not just your Program Narrative. They include a myriad of required documents. So you'll see on the side of this the Application Checklist. I really encourage you to really start. After you read the solicitation, start by taking a look at that checklist and starting to think about how much time it will take you to get the items that are developed on that checklist. So develop a timeline. As Elizabeth mentioned, if you need letters of support or MOUs, that may take a few weeks. So be sure to build that into your timeline. Last thing I'll say also is read the solicitation a second time. The solicitations are chock-full of really important and valuable information. We encourage you to go back through after you've read it the first time, and really think about how you would respond to each of the prompts in a solicitation. Next slide.

So, when you think about writing your Proposal Narrative, the proposals are broken down into four main categories. So the first will be the Description of the Issue. The second, the Project Design and Implementation of proposed project. The third, the Capabilities and Competencies of your team. And the fourth is going to be your Plan for Collecting the Required Data for the Solicitation's Performance Measures.

So, one last thing I'll mention on this piece, I really encourage you, think a little bit in the solicitation towards the back of the solicitation, you'll see roughly kind of what percentage peer reviewers are assigning to each aspect of the Proposal Narrative. And really think about that as you're mapping out how you write your solicitation, how much time or space you're going to dedicate to each portion of the narrative. Next slide.

So, I'd really encourage you, as you think about drafting your Proposal Narrative, break down each of the questions or prompts for each section. So on the screen, you'll see an example of how you can do this. So solicitations really are very clear about some of the questions we ask. So on the Description of the Issue, for example, we'll often ask you to

offer examples of what the issue is that needs to be addressed and maybe demonstrate you understand the nature of this, offer data to back that up. If the program is designed to help collect data, then really offer a thorough description of why data doesn't exist. Describe the efforts that have been done to address the gaps or the needs that this proposal seeks to address. So definitely encourage you use those questions that are included in each section of the solicitation as a prompt to help you map out your Program Narrative. Next slide.

So for Planning and Organizing, I also strongly encourage you to take a look at the different review criteria. So first, I would encourage you to take a look at the Priority Consideration Areas. So many program solicitations for OJP include priority considerations. We have a few of those listed on the side here on the left-hand side of the slide. I encourage you to take a look at those and to take a look at where it guides you to incorporate information.

So, for example, with the information included on the slide, this priority consideration 1B, you would need to include that you're requesting that priority consideration in your Capabilities and Competencies section of your Program Narrative. But I'd also encourage you to learn a little bit, there will be some information in the solicitation about the Basic Minimum Requirements. Applications that do not meet the basic minimum requirements will not be reviewed. So be sure that you're reviewing not only against the full checklist, but especially against the Basic Minimum Requirements to ensure that your application will fully be reviewed. And as I mentioned on the previous slide, each of those sections has the percentage of that each peer reviewer will assign to your Program Narrative. So be sure to kind of dedicate some brain power to how you're going to divide up the content of your Program Narrative.

Next up, I really want to encourage you, as you're working on your Program Narrative, to also start working on your draft of your Budget, very early on in the—in the process. Make sure that you read and understand the requirements for the budget. So, for example, many programs will require you to include a little bit of funding for grantee convenings or meetings, or it may require a certain amount of funding be set aside for research or evaluation. Make sure that you know those requirements and that you incorporate those into your budget and that your budget lines with your narrative and your proposal. Make sure that you're identifying any caps on expenses or expenses that aren't allowed or match requirements. And while all of this will be included in the program solicitation, I also encourage you if you have specific questions about things that are allowable or unallowable to visit the DOJ financial—grants financial guide. There's a link on the screen. And that's going to be at

[ojp.gov/financialguide/doj/index.htm](http://ojp.gov/financialguide/doj/index.htm). I definitely encourage you to take a look at that. Next slide.

So, as you think about developing your Budget and Budget Narrative, make sure that your budget aligns with the work being proposed in your narrative. Make sure that the expenses are directly referenced to the proposal narrative. And don't ask for supplies or for activities that are not clearly aligned or described in your program narrative and in particular, your program description in the narrative. Personnel costs should be directly related to the project.

And then finally, I do want to take just a moment to talk about subrecipients. So, subrecipients should be categorized as either subawards or procurement contracts. And it should be clearly stated in both the Proposal Narrative and the Budget Narrative.

One tool that I like to really guide prospective applicants to is the OJP toolkit. I believe there's a checklist on our website. And again, there's a link on the screen that'll be shared as well. If you're unsure, if your subrecipient would be a procurement contract or a subaward, we have some great tools to help you figure that out. And again, I know this is kind of the theme of the day, but I really encourage you to do that early on in the process. This can help you with budgeting and with writing your proposal. Next slide.

Just a few final tips on the Budget and the Budget Narrative, make sure that you include adequate funding to fully implement the project. But don't add extra money if you don't need that to execute what's being proposed. Definitely encourage you in the Budget Narrative portion. Don't leave questions for reviewer about the purpose of requested funds. You can be very descriptive in the Budget Narrative to explain exactly what funds could--are proposed to be used for. The final thing I'll note on the Budget and Budget Narrative, please, please make sure that this number matches what's on the SF-424. That's going to be turned in on that initial portion that Elizabeth mentioned in Grants.gov. So please make sure that your budget that is submitted in JustGrants matches that total number that's submitted on your SF-424. Okay. All right.

Next, and I know we've mentioned this a couple of times, but definitely be sure to take a look for those extra components, not just your budget, not just your program narrative, but be sure that you're including all of the extra forms and documents that are required for you. That'll include oftentimes a timeline or an MOU or other supporting documents. So be sure that you triple check that checklist at the back of the solicitation and that you're incorporating enough time in your planning process and your writing process to successfully develop and upload all of those documents. Next slide. All right.

And I know I've mentioned it many times, but I can't emphasize enough. Definitely double, triple check that checklist at the end of your solicitation. I recommend doing this a few times throughout your proposal development process. This will make sure that you don't miss anything at the last minute. You're not scrambling to pull together a last-minute letter of support from a partner or a form that's required. So definitely recommend triple checking that as you go forward. Next slide.

We all run into technical issues from time to time. If you're experiencing technical difficulties at any time, you can contact any of the different resources on the screen. So, if you run into issues with SAM.gov, Grants.gov, or JustGrants, you can access any helplines both via phone, via email, and we can try to address your issues for you. And if you're experiencing additional issues, you can always contact the OJP Response Center if you have specific questions about the application with the solicitation itself. So you'll contact the OJP Response Center for that. And in addition to reaching out to the Response Center for specific questions about program solicitations, really encourage you, as Elizabeth did, to listen into the applicant webinar. Often we post recordings of webinars on our websites. Someone else may have had the same question as you and it may have been answered. So definitely recommend taking a look at that. And then review any solicitation, FAQs, or other relevant things such as past successful applications or program narratives that are often posted on our website. Next slide.

All right. Right now, I am going to turn it over to Lisa Hartman, our Training Specialist, who is going to walk through JustGrants

LISA HARTMAN: Thank you, Sunny and Elizabeth. Let me get myself set up here and we will move forward. All right. Is my screen displaying appropriately?

DARYL FOX: Indeed.

LISA HARTMAN: All right. Well, thank you. I'm excited to be able to talk to you a little bit about the JustGrants system and the application process. And today, I really want to talk about the very initial overview information you're going to need when you begin to submit your application for BJA award. We're going to talk today a little bit about Entity Onboarding and Application Submission. And at the end of this, I'm going to give you some training resources that you might find useful when you are in the process of actually submitting your application.

So, the first thing I want to talk about is Entity Onboarding. And to explain, first of all what an entity is, it's an organization that has been registered with SAM.gov, in order to do business with the federal government. One item of business might be submitting an application for funding.

There are actually three critical systems that are involved in preparing for and submitting an application to DOJ. Now, this high-level roadmap shows all of the steps that you're going to want to keep in mind as you move forward. Now, for entities or organizations that are new to JustGrants, the initial entity onboarding process occurs during application submission, and it relies on two additional federal systems for critical onboarding data. Organizational entities seeking federal funding are required to register and maintain an active status in SAM.gov. Now, for this reason, SAM.gov is considered the federal government's source of truth for organizational entity identifiers. If an organizational entity is new to JustGrants, the SAM.gov E-Biz point of contact role is automatically onboarded as the entity administrator in JustGrants. Once that person is onboarded into JustGrants, then the SAM.gov E-Biz point of contact or entity administrator can transfer that role to somebody else that they've already onboarded into JustGrants. We'll talk about JustGrants roles here in a minute, because it's important to understand the various roles and access each role allows in JustGrants.

Now, for entities that are new to JustGrants, the initial entity onboarding process is triggered when you submit an application for DOJ funding in Grants.gov, where entities first apply as part of that two-step grant application process that Sunny was talking about. And then once JustGrants receives that Grants.gov application, the entity administrator is going to receive an email with onboarding instructions.

Now, as mentioned, for entities new to JustGrants, the initial entity administrator in JustGrants is initially automatically assigned to the individual listed as the E-Biz point of contact in the entity SAM.gov account. Entity information like the UEI or Unique Entity Identifier, the legal name, address, and doing business as name, they're all stored in SAM.gov. However, during the application process, that information flows from SAM.gov through Grants.gov, and finally populates the entity profile in the application in JustGrants. Now, for existing entities, it's going to be important to ensure that your SAM.gov registration is current. And then you'll begin with the next step, step two.

Now, Grants.gov is a federal website that provides access to funding opportunities for multiple government agencies. To apply for funding, you will need to log into Grants.gov using credentials that are linked to your SAM.gov account. And once you're logged into Grants.gov, you'll search for the funding opportunity, you'll select a competition ID that's



associated with that funding opportunity, and you're going to submit the SF-424 and SF-LLL forms. So these are standard government forms. It's a great idea to register in advance at Grants.gov. You can do so anytime during the year, so when it's time to apply, then you're ready to search for opportunities and apply quickly.

Now, once JustGrants receives the Grants.gov application, the entity administrator receives an email with onboarding instructions. Again, entities that are new to JustGrants should make sure to have an active user as the E-Biz point of contact, because no further actions are going to be able to take place until this role is filled.

We have two systems in JustGrants, DIAMD and JustGrants. These are the two DOJ systems that enable entities to manage users and work. The entity administrator is the only one who has access to DIAMD, which is the system that JustGrants uses to manage entity users, assign them roles. And then once the entity administrator has all of the roles assigned and all of the individuals onboarded, then they can assign those individuals to particular applications and awards in JustGrants.

Now, once the users complete their registration process or DIAMD registration process, then they can log into JustGrants and complete any assigned work.

Now the roles in JustGrants are important because each role provides a specific access to areas of JustGrants and they don't overlap. So it's important to understand which roles are critical to managing applications and awards.

Now, user roles allow, again, specific access in JustGrants. Each new user can have one or more than one role assigned based on the type of work they're going to do in JustGrants. We've talked quite a bit about that entity administrator role and what the basic tasks are for that person. Now, in addition to managing users and keeping that entity profile information current, they also have read-only access to all applications and awards in JustGrants, so they have a bird's-eye view of everything. Now, if the entity administrator also needs to take some part in managing awards or applications, that person can be assigned additional roles that allow them to do so. The grant award administrator generally handles programmatic requirements, including submitting performance reports, initiating and submitting grant award modifications, and initiating award closeout. We also have an alternate grant award administrator role available, and this role is intended to provide support to the grant award administrator a more limited capacity.

Now, the application submitter is the only role that can enter data into an application, certify it, and submit it on behalf of your entity. In Grants.gov, there's only one application submitter. When the application is submitted in Grants.gov, that person becomes the primary application submitter in JustGrants. However, once that application reaches JustGrants, an additional two application submitters may be assigned to that application, so that all three can work on it interchangeably.

The authorized representative is the only role that may accept or decline an award on behalf of the entity. Now, this role must be assigned to someone in your organization with the legal authority to enter into a binding agreement with the Department of Justice and is legally authorized by your organization to agree to the award terms and conditions.

Finally, the financial manager submits federal financial reports on behalf of the organization. Now as mentioned before, each of these individual roles has very specific basket of tasks that they're allowed to do. However, if one person is going to be submitting, for instance, both performance reports and financial reports, they could be assigned both of the roles that allow them to do that.

Now we're going to take a high level look at the application process. As mentioned, there are those three systems involved in submitting an application for DOJ funding.

Now, this part of the grants lifecycle involves completing and submitting web-based forms, as well as attachments that are required by the public solicitation. Now, aside from the SF-424 and the SF-LLL, which are completed in Grants.gov, most of your application is entered in JustGrants. Your entity information is populated based upon entries made in SAM.gov and used in Grants.gov. Now, this is important to know: you will have two application submission deadlines, one for Grants.gov and one for JustGrants. I know Elizabeth mentioned this before, but it bears repeating. Most of the application requirements are going to be submitted from JustGrants. Now, some of the ways that JustGrants streamlines the process is that you're provided with the ability to use a web-based budget detail worksheet. So not only is this process more efficient, but it also establishes a shared structure and narrative for all of DOJ. Streamline validation of your budgets allows the process of clearing new budgets to be much faster. Now your organization, specifically your assigned entity administrator has full control over users and award assignments, and does not require intervention from DOJ to make changes to any of those assignments. Again, the entity administrator defaults to your organization's E-Biz POC from SAM.gov, but that person can reassign those responsibilities to another user as needed in JustGrants.

The user with the application submitter role is the only person in JustGrants that's able to submit an application. This role is automatically created when the application is submitted in Grants.gov. The person submitting the information in Grants.gov is assigned to the application in JustGrants. And again, once that application reaches JustGrants, an additional two application submitters can also be identified and assigned to that application, so all three can work on it, not at the same time, but they can all three work on the application. And again, the entity administrator can reassign this role as needed. Now, the application submitter identifies the forms needed to submit the application, completes the web-based budget form, completes and certifies the application on behalf of your entity, and submits that application in JustGrants. Now, if a member is assigned only the application submitter role, they're not going to be able to see any funded awards in JustGrants. If you need to both be an application submitter and access and edit or work with funded awards, then that person can be assigned both the application submitter role and the other any other role that they need in order to accomplish the task that they're assigned.

Now, as mentioned, submitting an application is a two-step process, starting at Grants.gov and ending with submission of the application in JustGrants. As we mentioned before, each system has its own deadline. So Grants.gov has a deadline. Both of these deadlines were pointed out on the front page of the solicitation. If you have not submitted the application in Grants.gov by the deadline, that solicitation is removed from Grants.gov and no one is able to apply any longer, and that's the end of the road. Now, once the application has been submitted and validated in Grants.gov, it's automatically transferred to JustGrants for completion. It might take several days for Grants.gov to complete validations and release it to JustGrants. JustGrants also has a deadline, typically a week or so after the Grants.gov deadline. And be sure you're clear on these two deadlines. Again, they're listed on the first page of the solicitation. The JustGrants submission deadline allows additional time to complete the application requirements past the Grants.gov deadline. Now, this is important, submitting early in both systems is recommended. If you submit prior to the JustGrants deadline, you will have the option to recall the application for editing if you've missed something or if you want to change something. But once that JustGrants deadline has passed, that's no longer an option. Now, if you're not really clear on everything when you're entering information in Grants.gov, it's okay to enter preliminary information. If you haven't, for instance, fully determined your budget or your project scope, you're going to be able to edit and update all your entries in JustGrants. That's not necessary then to go back to Grants.gov to update your entries there. Once it moves from Grants.gov to JustGrants, that's the only place that you have to worry about your application.

Now, all items requested in the solicitation for application submission must be in the application when it's submitted from JustGrants. Applications are customized based on the requirements of the solicitation. For instance, some solicitations might require applicants to submit goals, objectives, and timelines, while others may not. To understand the requirements, the solicitation is your best source of information regarding what you need to include in your application. And in the situation where you're uploading documentation, it may also include formatting requirements, so pay close attention to what the solicitation is telling you.

Now, I do have some quick tips to ensure success when you're using JustGrants. So we recommend that you use Chrome or Microsoft Edge to access JustGrants. Internet Explorer does not provide the optimal experience in JustGrants. For entities that already have a JustGrants account prior to applying in Grants.gov, the application submitter should be sure to use the email associated with their JustGrants account to apply for funding, that way it'll match up with your role in JustGrants when that application is submitted from Grants.gov to JustGrants. If you use a different email address, it thinks you're a different person. If you're applying for or managing awards with multiple UEIs or Unique Entity Identifiers, then you will need to associate a unique email address with each account. This would be a situation in which a large organization might apply for funding under different doing business as names. And in that case, it becomes a little bit more complicated and you'll have multiple JustGrants accounts. But each UEI, just as you're starting off, you'll need to associate a unique email address with that account.

Now, each time you log into JustGrants, you'll need to complete multi-factor authentication. You're going to set this up when you register in JustGrants. So you'll be able to determine if that multi-factor authentication is, for instance, a text message, an email, a voicemail. You get to decide how you want that to happen, but you will have to handle multifactor authentication. So every time you log in, you're going to have to press a button to send a code as a text message, email, or voicemail. And then you'll need to enter that code in addition to your username and password in order to log into JustGrants. This keeps your JustGrants account secure.

Now, also take note that there are certain web-based forms that you're going to submit directly into JustGrants. For instance, the proposal abstract and the web-based budget. Many applications, again, also require goals, objectives, deliverables, and timelines. You want to be sure all your budget information is included in the budget detail form and ensure that you certify any memorandum of understanding or MOUs, any disclosures and assurances.

Now, the budget is one of the most complex portions of your application. Before you begin work on entering the budget in your application, it's a good idea as mentioned by Sunny to review the solicitation for the specific requirements of your application. You can open the solicitation by selecting the solicitations instructions link in the upper right corner of the page. So you can actually open the solicitation from inside your application in JustGrants, which is really nice. The solicitation opens in PDF format and you can either print it or you can keep it open on another monitor if you have one for your reference while you enter information. And honestly, there are a lot of links in the solicitation that might give you answers, so it's really a good idea to have it open in digital form while you're working on your application so that you can explore answers within the links in the solicitation.

In your application, there's also a link in JustGrants that opens to the DOJ Financial Guide. And this link is going to provide you with a general understanding of financial terms as they're applied across DOJ. You're going to find definitions of terms, policy information, and descriptions that are going to assist you in understanding the information that's required in your application.

Once you've reviewed the solicitation and the DOJ financial guide, now you're ready to complete the budget. In the case of a budget file attachment, sometimes the budget is uploaded as file attachment or a series of file attachments. You might want to go ahead and make your entries in a spreadsheet. But in other cases, the budget is actually entered directly into JustGrants in a series of forms on screen. And that's then the way that you're going to need to enter your budget. So there are two different ways that might be presented. You're going to have to go with the one that your solicitation requires, so it will be fairly clear, whether you have a lot of fields that you need to enter your budget items, or if it's asking you for a file upload.

Now, after you've submitted your application, you might be wondering what's next. So your entity is going to be notified if they've received an award when all the applications for solicitation have been reviewed, typically no later than September 30th of the calendar year. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified no later than December 30th of the calendar year. Now, it's important to remember who your entity administrator and authorized representatives are. They're going to be notified if the deadline for the applications is changing. So, as I was saying, the entity administrator and the authorized representative are going to be notified if the deadline for the application changes. The system's also going to notify the application submitter, the entity administrator, and the authorized rep when the application has been received in

JustGrants from Grants.gov. And as the entity administrator who's going to receive notification on when the award notifications have been sent.

Now, once you've submitted your application, you're going to see the status in JustGrants on your application will say "submitted". If it says anything else, it has not been submitted to DOJ. And if it is not submitted prior to that JustGrants deadline, then it will not be able to be submitted at that point.

Now, I hope you've gained some insight from the material presented today. And I'd like to provide you with some additional resources that we've created to kind of guide you through this process. Now, embedded in this PowerPoint are links to all the information we covered today in addition to some other information that you may find useful. The Justice Grants website houses all the training material that you're going to need to work your way through JustGrants. We place direct links here to all application submission resources, which could be found on the website.

And as mentioned before we also have this JustGrants training website <https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov>. And this is what it looks like when you log in. You're going to find just a wealth of information here. We're going to focus a little bit on the training link today, but please do take the time to look through this very, very useful website to find all sorts of information about JustGrants.

Now, once you open the training link, you'll see a list of training topics displayed. And it's a good idea for everyone to start with the Entity User Experience Guide. It kind of covers navigation and helps get you get oriented within JustGrants, whether you're in there to submit an application or if you have a funded award using that navigation, will really help you out to understand the best ways to navigate through the system. And then once you've selected the topic to explore, you'll open a page to the training resources dedicated to that topic. For instance, in our case, you'd want to look at the application submission page, which has just been, you know, revamped and it's just highly organized. And will provide you with virtually every sort of training and material you might need. Typically, you're going to find a job aid reference guide, which is a very large guide that will walk you through all of the steps of submitting an application in JustGrants. These are linked to step-by-step videos. So if you prefer to see something in video form, you'll be able to locate specific videos that will, for instance, walk you through how to upload a proposal narrative or how to check for errors in your application at the end. Now, these are very short videos. They're meant to be used while you're working, so you don't really have to set aside hours to view them. You can just pull them

up and access them on demand. And they can really help if you're in the middle of an application, you just want to verify your next steps.

Now again, that job aid reference guide provides step-by-step instructions with screenshots to help you walk through a series of tasks. You can print these if you like or you can view them on screen. It all depends on how you work best. They're also a great reference like the videos if you're in the middle of a task and you just want to verify the next steps.

Now, the Department of Justice has several managing offices, and so we have a lot of application submission resources here. The OJP Grant Application Resource Guide is really a useful one, and I think, Sunny mentioned that one as well. And they also mentioned the funding opportunities link here as well. If you happen to be in Grants.gov, that is not a DOJ system, it's actually run by another agency. We're not able to support that. But if you need support in Grants.gov, we provided the link for that. There's also a DOJ Application Submission Checklist, which has been recently revamped and revitalized. So, highly recommend that you access that. And then we also have a list of SAM.gov Resources if you're new to that system. And then finally, you can go straight to Grants.gov using the link that you see here.

Now, I'd like to do one quick thing, and that is I'd like in the chat to go ahead and put a link to every one of our weekly training webinars. So the training team, every week, on Wednesdays, an application submission webinar where we actually walk through all of the screens in the application. It's much lengthier. It's a two-hour class because it's quite lengthy to put an application together. But we talk about some of this high level information, but we'll go through each one of the screens in a sort of a standard JustGrants application. So, highly recommend that you join us there. We run these every Wednesday all the way through August. And with that, I'd like to go ahead and turn the session back over to Elizabeth and I will stop sharing.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: Thank you, Lisa. I appreciate it. I think we all appreciate it because I think what you're talking about is exactly what I said. And the first step of this whole thing is not only getting yourself squared away with SAM, your SAM's registration and your JustGrants registration, but also taking opportunity to learn more about the application process. So that was incredibly helpful. And I hope I encourage you all to take the two-hour class with her because we try to make it easy, but we also don't want you at 8:00 p.m. when it's due to have an issue. And so hopefully we can troubleshoot it in advance so you're comfortable with the system and submitting it.

So, in support of that, I'm going to go through some grant application resources for you as well. The first one I'd like to—hopefully, you can see my screen now—is what we talked about the OJP Grant Application Resources Guide. I do know in the chat there's been—or the questions and answers that's been posted as well by Sunny. And she mentioned it briefly, but this walks you through each part of how to apply, what to do information from things like what a proposal abstract should look like, and how to complete that to budget preparedness, financial information, attachments, et cetera. So I would definitely start there, in your request to make yourself more knowledgeable about our process and what each piece of an application is supposed to look like. And here are some more resources for you.

So, here you can also find past successful applications. With that, I'd like to say it's just the narrative piece. So you'll see the narrative about what the project's about. So you can say, "I'm running this project and wonder if there's others that have been funded that are similar to my project." We are not making the entire application available to you. That's not it. It's just a little snippet for you to see if maybe your project is similar to and has been successfully funded in the past by BJA.

So, in order to get updates about solicitations, trainings, things like that, I recommend that you subscribe to our number of resources like our newsletter. We also have JUSTINFO, which is a twice monthly email newsletter and as well as there's a Department of Justice email that you can do as well. So there's a lot of opportunities. All of this is available online also from our website if you're interested. And we want to stay connected with you. We have a Facebook as well as X, formerly Twitter, YouTube, et cetera. So definitely take a look at getting that yourself linked up to that so that you can get any information that we're getting. So, for example, that's how we often let people know about solicitation. So not only on our website, but we'll also send out a Facebook. It'll be on Facebook. It'll be on Twitter. It'll be every which way. Because we, again, we want to get the most people knowing about our solicitation, so we can get the literally the best applications that we possibly can.

So, with that, I'm going to turn this over to the questions and answer section. I know you guys have been blowing up our questions and answers, the Q and A chat box. And so with that, I'd like to take an opportunity to answer some of those that come in. Let me see. I'm going to stop sharing so I can actually read your questions. Is there any here that we haven't answered that they need to raise Lisa or Sunny? Someone was asking about...

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: Yes.



ELIZABETH WOLFE: ...the in-depth application process training, and is there a link to that, Lisa? How do they find out about that? Is that from the JustGrants resource site?

LISA HARTMAN: Yes. I'm going to go ahead and put that link in here. Again, it is [https://, I'm putting it in the chat, justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training/weekly-training-webinar](https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training/weekly-training-webinar). And that will take you to a page where you can see the four different courses that we offer. There's one on applications on Wednesdays, and we offer it every Wednesday. So you can register for any of these classes anytime you want, as many times as you like, if you miss something. And there's no charge of course. So, please feel free to sign up as much and as often as you need.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: Thank you. We also have a question about how do I register for an account with JustGrants on the page. I only see an option to log in.

LISA HARTMAN: So that's a really good question. So the only way to get a JustGrants account, if your entity has not already submitted an application, is to go through the application submission process. So if your entity is new to DOJ funding, then the only way to get a JustGrants account is to register in SAM.gov, log into Grants.gov, and apply for funding opportunity there. Submitting an application for the first time in Grants.gov will automatically create your JustGrants account. Now, if your entity already has a JustGrants account and you don't have a login, you need to find your entity administrator. They can invite you to be part of the existing JustGrants account, so two different ways.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: Great. Very helpful. Looks like we've answered a lot of them. We've just got one about are there any tips on streamlining the SAM application process? We have it to renew ours for the next cycle. I don't think I have any SAM tips, I'm afraid.

LISA HARTMAN: I'm sorry. I was trying to unmute. I'm afraid I don't either. SAM.gov is a system that is managed by a completely separate federal agency. So, if you go to the SAM.gov site, I am sure that you can navigate the SAM.gov site. They have a lot of training information there. They have a support system there as well. It's just not something that we run, we manage at DOJ. So we don't have that here today.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: Out of our control, unfortunately. There was a private chat that came up where someone was specifically asking if their organization would be eligible as a nonprofit. And what I'd like to go back to is the beginning of the presentation where

we talked about what's really, really important in the application is to look at eligibility. That is the key. Even if you think your organization should be able to do the project, but you're not one of the types of listed org entities, then you would not be eligible. So I would encourage you, if they were specifically a nonprofit, I would encourage you to look and see. We do a number of solicitations where nonprofits are eligible. And so what I would do is go through them and look, we don't necessarily have a list of just one specifically only for nonprofits, but whenever you see a solicitation come up, you think, "Hmm, that looks like something that I could do that would fit our project. I think we'd be great at it." Look at the eligibility and it will clearly list if you're eligible. So we don't try to keep it a secret. We want everybody to be successful and not to waste any of their time. So definitely look at the eligibility criteria.

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: Elizabeth, I wanted to offer one very quick correction, if it's okay? To something that I...

ELIZABETH WOLFE: Sure.

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: ...had mentioned. So earlier I had mentioned, you know, be sure to double check after you turn in your SF-424. Make sure that your amount is the exact same in your application in JustGrants. I actually just found out that apparently we have updated that. So if in between the time when you turn in that SF-424 and you turn in your full proposal in JustGrants, if that dollar amount has changed, you are now allowed to move forward in that way. And we'll use the information submitted in JustGrants. So did want to clarify that just in case that comes up for anyone.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: That's super helpful.

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: I see we also had a question in the chat about the drawdown process for current grantees. That's separate from this process, but I encourage you to reach out to your grant manager and they should be able to get you training on that process.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: Someone also asked about award duration and if that's posted in the solicitation. I responded to that question and the answer is, yes, we're clear about the amount of money available and we're very clear about the period of performance, which is the award period. So depending on how long it is, you'll know specifically in in the solicitation.

LISA HARTMAN: I also see one that says, "Can you go over the site to create the account?" And I just want to remind that there are actually three accounts that need to be created. There's an account for SAM.gov and the steps for that account creation would be found on that website, SAM.gov, which is managed, I believe by Health & Human Services, HHS agency. There's also Grants.gov and the steps to create a Grants.gov account are found on that website, Grants.gov. And then the JustGrants account is for new entities is created during the application submission process. Once the application for a new entity is submitted from Grants.gov to JustGrants, then that account is automatically created. There's no other way to do it. If you already have a JustGrants account, your organization has a JustGrants account and you want your user account, you can find your entity administrator and they will invite you to be a user on the existing account. But again, I just want to verify, there are three separate systems that you need to have an account. For JustGrants, new accounts are created automatically in the process of submitting that application and Grants.gov. Existing accounts, your onsite entity administrator will create one for you. And I see one herein the chat, "What's the process if there was one for an adjusting financial narrative?" If that's a JustGrants question, you can adjust the financial narrative in an application as long as it is prior to the JustGrants deadline. Once the JustGrants deadline has passed, then there's no opportunity to update that information. If you have a funded award on the other hand, there's a grant award modification process that you would handle, but that does not applicable to applications.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: I'm looking through here.

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: I see a question here about, "Are people with a criminal conviction allowed to apply?" So want to encourage everyone as Elizabeth mentioned in each solicitation there will be guidance on who is eligible to apply, what types of entities. For those entities where individuals are allowed to apply, there will be some guidance there around that. But I would, in that case, definitely take a look and look for programs where individuals are allowed to apply. And that'll again, be on that eligibility criteria section of the solicitation.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: There's a question about a process. "How would you process every allocation for a grant?" I think I need a little bit more information to understand the question. But if you have a current grant with us and you're talking about like supplemental funding or something like that, you would need to contact your BJA staff person about that. But I'm afraid I'm not quite sure. I'm not exactly sure what you're trying to ask about that one.

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: And I see a question here asking for a little bit of clarity around my correction from earlier. That is correct. The amount for Fiscal Year '24, the amount of funding requested listed in your SF-424 will be considered preliminary. And the amount used in JustGrants will be the amount that would be considered in an application.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: And I see, Rachel, you responded, if a subaward recipient wants to reallocate funds, like a subaward, maybe a subaward didn't do it, then you would, and if they bowed out of the project, then you would need to still work with your BJA staff person to go through it, depending on what's all involved and the total scope of it. It could be a budget modification. It could be a programmatic modification. So you'd have to work that through in that particular case. And if you're talking about like you haven't been awarded and you're asking after you've been awarded, it's the same thing you would work with your BJA staff person through that. I don't know if I got. There was a couple budget modification. Great. We answered that one.

I also got a like a question popped up and I'm not seeing it anymore, so I'm not sure if it came in a chat or a different way, but someone asked, "Is there a chance that I could request in our application a certain amount of money and then we could get a different amount than what we requested for?" All of our funding is dependent on what becomes available. All of our awards are dependent on available funding. And so if you were to request a million dollars and for some reason we're not able to do it, there may be a slight change, but usually whatever you're applying for as long as it's justified appropriately in the budget and it's selected as being the award that we should be funding, then they would work out that amount for you. But typically it's not like we go back and forth and haggle on an award.

So, there's another question that's similar to the one with the criminally-involved, justice-involved person. "Are there grants to prevent justice impacted individuals from applying?" It's the same thing that Sunny just said, excuse me, you would have to look at eligibility.

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: I see there's a question here on when are peer reviewers selected? So peer reviewers are selected throughout the process, so that that will happen while the program solicitation is out in the field. We are always looking for more peer reviewers. So I'll find the link and drop that in the chat, but encourage you to apply to be a peer reviewer.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: And, Sunny, this brings up a good point. I'd like to say is that we don't like release all of our solicitations at once, right? And similar to peer reviewers, we don't select all our peer reviewers at once. So it really is this cycle where some are earlier in the year than others. And so don't think that come March 1st if you haven't seen what you wanted posted or you're interested in, it won't be posted. If we have a rolling period where solicitations are constantly being dropped and so it's not all at the same time. And typically we try to begin earlier in the year after, in December for example, like we would want to release them, you'll start to see a couple, a couple, a couple, and then quite a few more in the spring, but they can be posted quite late too in our calendar year. So just keep your eyes open, subscribe to all of our newsletters, get on our social media stuff, go check out our website often, and get alerts because when solicitations drop, they're available. And they're only open for a certain amount of time. So again, sort of, just keep that in mind, similar to peer reviewers. So we need peer reviewers in the beginning all the way to the end because we're constantly dropping solicitations, posting them, having applications come in. And then the peer review panels are being convened and reviewing all of those, so it's all throughout the year. And the [INDISTINCT]

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: [INDISTINCT]

ELIZABETH WOLFE: We got it. She got it answered. Sorry for the silence. It's hard for me to read and talk at the same time. So I'm reading all these questions coming through. I don't want to leave any of them out if I can answer them.

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: Okay. So it looks like we have one about, "Is Grants.gov aligned with JustGrants format for the individualized solicitation or is the applicant required to go into JustGrants for final formatting before submission?" So you'll need to apply from Grants.gov initially, and you will then need to go into JustGrants. Now, JustGrants is specific to the individual solicitation, so you shouldn't need to update anything in JustGrants as long as you are applying through the opportunity that you aligned with your Grants.gov submission.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: So it seems like we are slowing down on questions. This webinar is recorded. We will be providing you a link to all participants afterwards, including with it will the recording will be included our slides that we shared, the FTA training. They will have to find out more information for you about that.

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: The last question that I see is, "Can someone be a peer reviewer if their agency is also applying for funding?" So you would not be applied to or

you would not necessarily be selected for the program for which you're applying for funding. But as Elizabeth showed you earlier, BJA has many, many programs. So yes, you can be selected, your agent, you, as an individual can be selected to be a peer reviewer for programs where you don't have active applications. And, Elizabeth...

ELIZABETH WOLFE: All right.

OLIVIA "SUNNY" SCHNITZER: I'm not seeing many more.

ELIZABETH WOLFE: All right. Well, I appreciate you guys. And thank you for your time, Lisa and Sunny. I appreciate you doing this with me and I wish you all luck in this season of solicitations and applications. I look forward to hopefully seeing some of your names or organizations passing our desk because it's exciting stuff that we're doing. Again, our whole goal is to achieve safer communities and you are an important part of that, so thank you so much.

DARYL FOX: Great. 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.