

Continuation of the Federal Justice Statistics Program

SUMMARY: The purpose of this notice is to announce a public solicitation for the continuation of the Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) Federal Justice Statistics Program (FJSP) through a Cooperative Agreement. The FJSP serves as the national resource for data describing the processing of criminal cases in the Federal justice system. Under this program, data generated by Federal justice agencies are collected, maintained, analyzed, and archived. Regular annual reports and special topical reports are prepared that describe the Federal criminal justice system, Federal defendants and offenses, and other special issues of interest. The project to be funded under the proposed cooperative agreement will continue the program's current activities with emphasis placed on expansion of the program's website capabilities.

DATES: Proposals must be submitted to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) on or before 5:00 p.m. EST, November 12, 2004 through the Office of Justice Programs Grants Management System (GMS).

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS: The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) requires that funding applications be submitted through the **OJP Grants Management System (GMS)** website located at: <https://grants.ojp.usdoj.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mark Motivans, Program Manager, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 810 Seventh Street, NW, Washington D.C. 20531; Phone (202) 514-4272 (This is not a toll free number); Email: Mark.Motivans@usdoj.gov.

AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. § 3732 and 42 U.S.C. § 3711.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

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BACKGROUND: The Bureau of Justice Statistics' Federal Justice Statistics Program (FJSP) was initiated in 1982 to serve as a central resource for information describing the processing of Federal criminal defendants and characteristics of those defendants. The program collects data from different components of the Federal criminal justice system and tracks the progression of suspects from investigation through prosecution, adjudication, sentencing, and corrections. The program represents the primary BJS effort describing the Federal criminal justice system and responds directly to the legislative authorization that BJS "collect, analyze, and disseminate comprehensive Federal justice transaction statistics (including statistics on issues of Federal justice interest such as public fraud and high technology crime)" as set forth in 42 U.S.C. § 3732 (c)(15).

In keeping with the original program plan which was designed to minimize data collection costs, no original data collection is supported under this program. Data are obtained from operational Federal agencies including the U.S. Marshals Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Executive Office for the United States Attorneys, the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, the Bureau of Prisons, and the United States Sentencing Commission. In order to trace the flow of cases from one stage to another and to supplement any individual agency's data, computer matching techniques have been developed that permit the linking of data obtained from different sources. The linking of these data permits more complex and detailed analysis of particular issues.

Throughout the history of the FJSP, a regular series of reports have been produced. These reports include the annual **Compendium of Federal Justice Statistics** (available on the Internet at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pubalp2.htm#cfjs>) which describes, in detail, offenders processed at each stage of the Federal criminal justice system for a particular year; the annual **Federal Criminal Case Processing** report (available on the Internet at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pubalp2.htm#fccprd>) which presents key statistics for the reporting year and trends for the past several years; and a series of Special Reports addressing specific aspects of the Federal criminal justice system, specific offenses, or other special issues of interest. Recent Special Reports include: Money Laundering Offenders, 1994-2001, (available on the Internet at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/mlo01.htm>), Immigration Offenders in the Federal Criminal Justice System, 2000 (available on the Internet at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/iofcjs00.htm>), and Federal Firearm Offenders, 1992-98 (available on the Internet at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/ffo98.htm>).

An important aspect of the program is the **Federal Statistics Resource Center (FJSRC) website** currently located at <http://fjsrc.urban.org>. Future iterations of the website will be located at: <http://fjsrc.org>. The website serves as the public access site to the FJSP resources including an online query system for retrieving descriptive statistics for specific offense and offender characteristics and case processing outcomes. The website also provides access to electronic versions of BJS publications, a data download page enabling the public to retrieve raw agency data in ASCII format, and codebook documentation for performing independent analysis of the Federal data.

In addition, the program serves as the primary source of information for other BJS statistical series that describe individuals in the Federal criminal justice system; program staff respond to ad hoc BJS requests for specific data tabulations and analysis from public officials and private citizens.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES: The purpose of this award is to support the continuation of the Federal Justice Statistics Program. The recipient of funds will serve as the Federal Justice Statistics Resource Center whereby the recipient will continue to collect, maintain, and archive data from Federal justice agencies, produce annual reports (the **Compendium of Federal Justice Statistics** and **Federal Criminal Case Processing**), and topical special reports. Any Special Reports prepared by the recipient will be prepared under the direction of BJS staff. In addition, BJS staff may also initiate Special Reports. The recipient will be expected to assist BJS staff with Special Reports by providing the necessary data for analysis, when requested, assisting in the preparation of data tabulations and reviewing the methodology used to analyze the data.

A primary objective of this program is to continue the on-going expansion/enhancement of the **FJSRC web page**. Working with BJS staff, the recipient will incorporate enhancements to the FJSRC web site with the aim of improving user friendliness, timeliness, and accuracy of data. An example of a web enhancement would be text searching capability for electronic documents. All materials (including software code, documentation, and standard analysis datasets) developed by the FJSP recipient under this grant program belong to BJS and will be made available to the public.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: Both profit and nonprofit organizations may apply for funds. Consistent with OJP fiscal requirements, however, no fees may be charged against the project by profit-making organizations.

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE: Assistance will be made available under a cooperative agreement. Awards will be made for a period of 12 months with an option for two additional continuation years conditional upon availability of funds and the quality of the initial performance and products. Cost estimates are not to exceed \$700,000 for the initial 12-month period. Funding for subsequent years may include reasonable increases for cost-of-living and changes in scope of work, where applicable. The funding of this project is subject to the availability of funds.

SCOPE OF WORK: The objective of the proposed program is to continue basic activities initiated under the ongoing BJS Federal Justice Statistics Program. Specifically, the recipient of funds will serve as the Federal Justice Statistics Resource Center. The Resource Center will –

- Maintain and expand the Federal Justice Statistics Program Database. This will involve the collection, processing, and maintenance of data provided by Federal agencies participating in the program. The agencies currently participating in the program are: the U.S. Marshals Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Executive Office for the United States Attorneys, the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, the Bureau of Prisons, and the United States Sentencing Commission. (In addition to providing data describing the Federal courts' criminal docket, the Administrative Office also provides data describing the activities of the Federal pretrial services agencies and the Federal Probation and Supervision Service. The Federal Judicial Center has provided data describing the Federal courts' appellate docket.) The recipient should attempt to expand the program to include other Federal law enforcement agencies. The recipient will also be responsible for processing data to meet uniform classification categories and for linking data to permit analysis of data obtained from different sources. Recipient will adhere to all applicable Federal regulations regarding privacy (28 CFR part 22 and 42 U.S.C. 3789(g)).
- Prepare tapes and related documentation for archiving in the national archive maintained by BJS. The public use data tapes of the source data shall conform to BJS standards for submission to the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data at the University of Michigan. In addition, the recipient will prepare a set of standard analysis data files from each agency's source data for each fiscal year. These standard analysis data files will describe a particular cohort of defendants and will include all variables included in the source data and all variables created for the Compendium of Federal Justice Statistics. These standard analysis files will be included on a CD-ROM to be produced and distributed by BJS. The recipient will document each of the standard analysis data files and all programs used to create BJS reports. Such documentation, to the extent possible, will be maintained in an electronic database from which users can query variables of interest. This electronic data dictionary will also be included on the CD-ROM prepared by BJS. In addition, the recipient will document the methodology used to produce the Compendium of Federal Justice Statistics including the production of the standard analysis data files.
- Prepare the Compendium of Federal Justice Statistics and the Federal Criminal Case Processing report and submit both text and tables in camera-ready format for each Federal fiscal year.

- Prepare web site enhancements/expansion for the FJSRC. Recipient will provide web enhancements that improve the delivery of Federal justice data. Website enhancements will be determined in collaboration with BJS and recipient and will seek ways to improve the delivery of Federal justice data and reports to the public. Enhancement may include the development of innovative, graphical approaches to convey the Federal justice process. BJS will retain all rights to source code used to develop web site.
- Prepare BJS Special Reports, data tabulations, analyses, data sets, and other data manipulations in response to BJS requests. Any Special Reports proposed by the recipient will be designed in coordination with BJS. BJS will approve all Special Report topics proposed by the recipient.
- Provide BJS with electronic access to the Federal Justice Statistics Resource Center (including all source data, standard analysis data files, and software used to produce BJS reports) and computing resources, as necessary. In addition, the recipient must provide BJS staff with daily access to the standard analysis data files (for the most recent reporting period available) in a form in which variables name and values correspond to those included in the FJSP electronic data dictionary.
- Provide Internet access to the Federal Justice Statistics Resource Center. The recipient will provide direct access via the Internet to all FJSP data files from 1994 and onward and the electronic data dictionary. In addition, the recipient will provide Internet users with a World Wide Web-accessible query system for the Federal Justice Statistics Resource Center. Users must be provided with the capability of performing queries of the FJSP data bases to extract basic information describing individuals processed in the Federal criminal justice system. Statistics describing suspects and offenders will also be displayed by Federal judicial district consistent with any restrictions imposed by Federal agencies providing data. The Federal Justice Statistics Resource Center is currently located on the Internet at <http://fjsrc.urban.org>. All products developed for the Internet must be compliant with the accessibility standards and regulations promulgated pursuant to 29 U.S.C. § 794 (d).

PERFORMANCE MEASURES: To ensure compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), Public Law 103-62, this solicitation notifies applicants that they are required to provide performance data which are used to measure the results of this data collection, as well as contribute to the achievements of BJS's overall statistical program. BJS's mission is to produce and disseminate accurate, objective, and independent national statistics. OJP/BJS is responsible for measuring the relevance, utility, and accessibility of its information by the following outcomes: 1) demand for statistical data, and 2) utilization of data.

The grantee will be responsible for the following:

1. Data collections must be completed within 12 months from the acceptance of this award.
2. Increase the usability of the FJSRC website. Based on usability testing identify three enhancements and implement one of these enhancements within the project period. Examples of an enhancement include adding or augmenting a functionality such as one which permits users to manipulate the data in an on-line, interactive manner (e.g., allowing the creation of data tables, trend figures, maps; etc) or enhancing feature which allows users to export results to spreadsheet file format for download.
3. Provide a 100% response rate from Federal Agency respondents.
4. The FJSRC website will be subject to quarterly audits by BJS staff to ensure that posted data/information meets acceptable standards for: 1) data and text accuracy (e.g., minimal errors in posted data and in punctuation/spelling of posted text); 2) timeliness (e.g., data are posted within 6 months of completion of Standard Analysis Files (SAFs)); 3) operability (web links function in a reliable manner); and 4) the web site remains compliant with the accessibility standards and regulations promulgated pursuant to 29 U.S.C. § 794(d). "Acceptable standards" are achieved when no more than three substantial error reports are generated by BJS staff (substantial meaning multiple errors in more than one of the four areas listed above) within a quarterly reporting period.
5. The recipient must conduct verification checks of changes or additions made to annually submitted agency source data files that result in an error rate whereby follow-up by BJS is required for no more than 3 percent of total number of variables for that agency.
6. The recipient must conduct verification checks of annual source agency changes that result in changes in data documentation and ensure there will be no more than 5 variables in error for that year.

AWARD PROCESS: Proposals should describe, in appropriate detail, the procedures to be undertaken in furtherance of each of the activities described under the Scope of Work. Information provided should focus on activities to be conducted during the initial 12-month period but should also include a more general discussion of three-year objectives for the program. Information on staffing levels and qualifications should be included for each task and descriptions of experience relevant to the project should be included. Resumes of the proposed project director and key staff should be included in the proposal.

Applications will be competitively reviewed by BJS. Final authority to enter into a cooperative agreement is reserved for the Director, BJS, or his designee, who may, in his discretion, determine that none of the applications shall be funded. All materials developed under previous awards by the current grantee are available for public use. This includes the programming code used to create the standard analysis files and the linking system as well as code used to create the website.

Applications will be evaluated on the overall extent to which they respond to criminal justice priorities, conform to the goals of the Federal Justice Statistics Program, and appear to be fiscally feasible and efficient. Applicants will be evaluated on the basis of:

- Knowledge of, and experience in, working with different components of the criminal justice system with particular emphasis on knowledge of operational, management, and statistical data collected and maintained by various Federal criminal justice components;
- Statistical expertise in the area of data analysis, data linkage, and research;
- Experience in the application of statistical data to the analysis of criminal justice issues;
- Demonstrated ability to prepare high quality statistical reports;
- Availability of qualified professional and support staff and of suitable equipment for data processing and data manipulation;
- Demonstrated fiscal, management, and organizational capability suitable for providing sound program direction for this multi-faceted effort;
- Demonstrated ability to design and maintain interactive sites on the World Wide Web; and
- Reasonableness of estimated costs for the total project and for individual cost categories.

Application Requirements

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) now requires that funding applications be submitted through the OJP Grants Management System (GMS). Access through the Internet to this online application system will expedite and streamline the receipt, review, and processing of funding requests. Applications will only be accepted through the GMS online application system.

To learn how to begin the online application process, please refer to the Quick-Start Guide to using the Office of Justice Programs' Online Grants Management System (GMS). A toll-free telephone number (1-888-549-9901) has been established to provide applicants with technical assistance.

When applying for Federal funding, applicants must provide the following:

Applicant Information

Type of applicant
Employer Identification Number (EIN)
Organization unit
Legal jurisdiction name
Address
Contact person and phone number

Project Information

Title of project
Areas affected by project
Proposed project period of performance
Estimated funding request
Congressional District

Attachment 1 - Budget detail worksheet and budget narrative. The detailed budget includes salaries of staff involved in the project and the portion of those salaries to be paid from the award, fringe benefits paid to each staff person, travel costs, supplies required for the project, sub-contractual agreements, and other allowable costs (an example of a Budget Detail Worksheet is available online at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/Forms/budget_fillable.pdf.)

Attachment 2 - Project Narrative. The project narrative should describe activities as discussed in the Scope of Work and address the evaluation criteria. The project narrative should contain a detailed time line for project activities, a description of the survey methodology to be used including defined geographic boundaries, data collection method, data entry, and data documentation procedures.

Attachment 3 - Other Program Requirements (Key staff information, Privacy Certification, and Human Subjects Protection Certification of Compliance).

Information on key staff includes a staff loading chart, by task and contract year, showing the role and number of hours (per year) committed for proposed staff; identification of proposed key personnel and their qualifications for the significant functions in this project, along with concise descriptions of the duties each will perform under the grant; and an identification by name of all key personnel with decision making authority.

The **Privacy Certificate** is a certification of compliance with Federal regulation relating to the confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person collection for research and statistical purposes. It includes a description of procedures to be followed to protect identifiable data. (A model certificate is located at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/bjsmpc.pdf)

The **Human Subjects Protection Certification of Compliance** is a certification of compliance with Federal regulation relating to research and statistical projects to ensure the protection of human subjects against undue and unnecessary risks. (A model certificate is located at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/bjssspshs.pdf)

Assurances. The applicant must comply with the assurances in order to receive Federal funds under this program. It is the responsibility of the recipient of Federal funds to fully understand and comply with these requirements. Failure to comply may result in withholding of funds, termination of the award, or other sanctions.

Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace. Applicants are required to review and check off the box on the certification form included in their online application process. This form commits the applicant to compliance with the certification requirements under 28 CFR Part 69, "New Restrictions on Lobbying," and 28 CFR Part 67, "A Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement) and Government-wide Requirements for a Drug-Free Workplace (Grants)."

Please note that it is critical that the name, address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of the authorizing official are correct on these online forms.

October 22, 2004

Lawrence A. Greenfeld
Director
Bureau of Justice Statistics