



National Institute of Justice

S o l i c i t a t i o n

Jeremy Travis, Director

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Building Safer Public Housing Communities Through Locally Initiated Research Partnerships - 1998

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

March 31, 1998

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531

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I. Introduction

Drug abuse, drug trafficking and related violent crime, fear and disorder are extremely disruptive to family and community life. These events are especially destructive in public housing projects characterized by residents with severely restricted economic resources struggling to maintain a healthy environment for their families.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has supported Housing Authorities (HAs) in eliminating drug problems and drug-related crime through the Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP) over the past eight years. \$1.2 billion has been expended for this purpose during this time period. The purpose of PHDEP is to:

- Encourage HAs to use PHDEP resources to establish collaborative relationships and increase services and/or support, over and above what might ordinarily be provided to housing agency residents.
- Effectively coordinate with Federal, Tribal, State and local agencies to increase employment and training opportunities for low-income residents, and thereby reduce/eliminate drug-related crime.
- Increase the use of housing community facilities, and bring back a community focus to housing authority properties. Community policing; police mini-stations; and resident training, substance abuse prevention, intervention, treatment, structured aftercare and other human resources programs.

HAs may apply for PHDEP funding for employment of security personnel either contracted security guard services or HA police departments; reimbursement of local law enforcement agencies for additional security and protective services (reimbursement of a municipal public housing police division and/or bureau); physical improvements designed to enhance security; employment of investigators; voluntary tenant patrols; and programs to reduce/eliminate drug-related crime in or around the premises of the housing authority /development(s), including substance abuse prevention, intervention, treatment, and other referral programs.

Efforts by HAs to derive the greatest benefit from these funds have been hampered by a lack of adequate resources to analyze and assess individual program elements or the overall impact of total programs. Program evaluation is critical since it allows HA officials and residents to judge whether a program should be continued, altered, or discontinued based on sound empirical information. A second product of evaluation is the ability to transfer successes from one HA to another.

HUD's efforts to assist HAs in the evaluation of efforts to control and prevent drug and drug-related crime problems is evidenced by the recent HUD publication, *A Guide to Evaluating Crime Control Programs in Public Housing*. HUD is interested in furthering efforts to develop measurable indicators of the desired outcomes and impacts of PHDEP initiatives so that all stakeholders will be able to understand what happened in relevant ways.

Over the past three years, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) of the U.S. Department of Justice has developed a strategy to provide local

evaluation capacities rapidly and effectively to communities, neighborhoods, and locally-based collaborations. The funding strategy has been used by local and State police agencies, correctional agencies, and consortia of law enforcement and community-based service providers. This NIJ strategy has come to be known as Locally Initiated Research Partnerships.

Now, HUD, together with NIJ, plans to embark on a new effort to provide HAs with the resources to implement locally based evaluations that are responsive to the particular needs of the individual HA.

This solicitation seeks proposals for Locally Initiated Research Partnerships in Public and Indian Housing Authorities. NIJ, supported by HUD, will award eight to twelve projects for a total expenditure of up to \$975,000.

II. Rationale for Locally-Initiated Research Partnerships

Locally Initiated Research Partnerships (LIRPs) were originally conceived of as a means to assist State and local police departments to more effectively implement Community-Oriented Policing Programs through organizational and operational changes. The LIRP used funding supplied by NIJ to enable police personnel and researchers to work together cooperatively on strategic planning, program design and evaluation. The partnership allowed police personnel to rapidly acquire technically sound expertise through their cooperative work with researchers. Being participants in a cooperative research process allowed police departments themselves to develop additional skills to conduct strategic planning, design testable programs and measure program impacts. Additionally, the funding afforded researchers an opportunity to work with and within police departments to better understand police issues and functions and to undertake a focused

research and evaluation agenda that had local implications and a committed local audience for the findings of their work. One longer-range benefit from the partnership program is the continuing development of the collective capacity of the police profession and of the professional research community to measure what matters to police, the public, policy makers and knowledge builders.

III. Areas of Research Required

A proposal for an HA LIRP should include descriptions of each of the following components: purpose of the LIRP, the composition and functioning of the partnership, the problem for which a solution will be designed, the research plan, and consideration for the continuation of the partnership once Federal funding has concluded. Each of these components is described in detail, below:

Purpose: LIRP proposals can focus on either of two organizing principles:

- 1) To develop a technically sound strategy to evaluate the effectiveness and overall impact of an on-going program, or sub-elements of a program, with a built-in feed back loop that allows course correcting throughout the life of a program or program sub-element.
- 2) To identify problems within a public housing development relating to aspects of drug abuse, drug trafficking, crime, fear and disorder; design and implement a testable solution; and evaluate the impact of the solution.

Partnership Composition: LIRPs, at a minimum, must include officials and residents of a HA, and a researcher.

Beyond this the composition of an LIRP is not, in any sense, restricted. If a HA and residents chose to include HA Police or local police in the partnership, that is encouraged. Similarly, the private/public social service agencies or other government agencies can be included. Equally, there is no restriction on the numbers of researchers or academic institutions involved, as long as the role and funding of all proposed members are well defined.

Functions of the Partnership Members:

The specification of the role of each member of the partnership is important in ensuring high quality and technically feasible proposals. Partners must have equivalent though different roles not in the necessary amount of time devoted to the project, but in the sense that each principal partner has an equal if different voice, and participates in decision making fully. The basic partnership concept is that a researcher will work cooperatively with HA officials and residents to design testable solutions and evaluations. Researchers should not therefore be functioning outside the HA as an external evaluator. If HA officials and residents are to gain new skills in assessing and measuring their programs and innovations, they must be directly involved with the on-going research and evaluation design and development process. And, if researchers are to understand what goals and purposes HA officials and residents seek to achieve and what measures of success will be credible, researchers must work directly with HAs and residents. When partners function as equal contributors, skill gains, responsibility for outcomes, and motivation to fulfill responsibilities will develop to ensure high quality, credible results.

Types of Problems and Programs:

Applicants are invited to design partnerships that will develop testable solutions and evaluations for any drug or drug-related crime problem or program eligible for funding under PHDEP as summarized in Section I above.

Research Design: Some proposals may outline their work as beginning with strategic planning in order to develop or select a program for evaluation. While this approach is acceptable, proposals must contain a detailed and well described research design for sub-element program evaluation or overall program evaluation in order to meet the requirements of the solicitation. The research design should include a time and task outline in order to display how the proposed work will be accomplished. The advantage of the time and task outline is that it demonstrates the separate roles and involvement of each of the partnership members; and ensures that all partners can reasonably expect to accomplish the objectives of the LIRP.

Consideration for Continuation of the Partnership:

One purpose of the LIRP is to encourage an on-going relationship between local HA communities and researchers. In order to ensure that planning has begun to sustain partnerships after Federal funding has concluded the proposal must contain a description of how the partners propose this might be accomplished and what they will do to facilitate the continued relationship at least between the HA officials/residents and the researcher. Other members of the partnership can be involved in this thought process as well.

Special Requirements for Participants in Public Housing Community LIRPs:

All partnership teams supported by this program will be required to attend two conferences each year to be held in Washington, DC. Applicants should include funds for this purpose in their proposed budgets.

IV. How to Apply

Those interested in submitting proposals in response to this solicitation must complete the required application forms and submit related required documents. (See below for how to obtain application forms and guides for completing proposals.) Applicants must include the following information/forms to qualify for consideration:

- Standard Form (SF) 424—application for Federal assistance
- Assurances
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (one form)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Budget Detail Worksheet
- Budget Narrative
- Negotiated indirect rate agreement (if appropriate)
- Names and affiliations of all key persons from applicant and subcontractor(s), advisors, consultants, and advisory board members. Include name of principal investigator, title, organizational affiliation (if any), department (if institution of higher education), address, phone, and fax
- Proposal abstract
- Table of contents
- Program narrative or technical proposal
- Privacy certificate
- References
- Letters of cooperation from organizations collaborating in the research project
- Résumés
- Appendixes, if any (e.g., list of previous NIJ awards, their status, and products [in NIJ or other publications])

Proposal abstract. The proposal abstract, when read separately from the rest of the application, is meant to serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants must concisely describe the research goals and objectives, research design, and methods for achieving the goals and objectives. Summaries of past accomplishments are to be avoided, and proprietary/confidential information is not to be included. Length is not to exceed 400 words. Use the following two headers:

Project Goals and Objectives:**Proposed Research Design and Methodology:**

Page Limit. For grants exceeding \$50,000, the limit is 30 double-spaced pages. For grants under \$50,000, the limit is 15 double-spaced pages. Note this limit applies only to the program narrative part of the application, but not to the other components listed above.

Due date. Completed proposals **must be received** at the National Institute of Justice by the close of business on March 31, 1998. Extensions of this deadline will not be permitted.

Award period. In general, NIJ limits its grants and cooperative agreements to a maximum period of 12 or 24 months. However, longer budget periods may be considered.

Number of awards. NIJ anticipates supporting 8 to 12 grants under this solicitation.

Award amount. Awards totaling \$975,000 will be made available for this NIJ solicitation.

Applying. Two packets need to be obtained: (1) application forms (including a sample budget worksheet) and (2) guidelines for submitting proposals (including requirements for proposal writers and requirements for grant recipients). To receive them, applicants can:

S o l i c i t a t i o n

- Access the Justice Information Center on the Web:
<http://www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.html#nij>. At this site, the NIJ application forms and guidelines are available as electronic files that may be downloaded to a personal computer.
- Access the National Institute of Justice on the Web: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>. At this site, the NIJ application forms and guidelines are available as electronic files that may be downloaded to a personal computer.
- Request hard copies of the forms and guidelines by mail from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 800-851-3420 or from the Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770 (in the Washington, D.C., area, at 202-307-1480).
- Request copies by fax. Call 800-851-3420 and select option 1, then option 1 again for NIJ. Code is 1023.

Guidance and information. Applicants who wish to receive additional guidance and information may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770. Center staff can provide assistance or refer applicants to an appropriate NIJ professional. Applicants may, for example, wish to discuss their prospective research topics with the NIJ professional staff.

Send completed forms to:

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National Institute of Justice
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531
[overnight courier ZIP code 20001]

For more information on the National Institute of Justice, please contact:

National Criminal Justice Reference Service

Box 6000

Rockville, MD 20849-6000

800-851-3420

e-mail: askncjrs@ncjrs.org

You can view or obtain an electronic version of this document from
the National Institute of Justice website.

To access the site, go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>

If you have any questions, call or e-mail NCJRS.

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