



National Institute of Justice

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

Jeremy Travis, Director

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NIJ Request for Proposals for Comparative, Cross-National Crime Research Challenge Grants

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

September 1, 1998

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
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Washington, DC 20531

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National Institute of Justice
World Wide Web Site:
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>

NIJ Request for Proposals for Comparative, Cross-National Crime Research Challenge Grants

I. Introduction

In its effort to support and encourage cross-national and interagency partnerships devoted to producing and utilizing comparative research on crime, the National Institute of Justice is soliciting proposals for research on crime and criminal behavior of a cross-national and comparative nature. NIJ intends to support up to five research challenge grants to U.S. based researchers to conduct the U.S. part of a comparative study, for a total of up to **\$500,000**. Each project supported by NIJ must have counterparts to conduct parallel research outside of the United States. These counterparts may be supported by the government agencies or departments, private non-profit organizations, or universities of other nations. In this way, it is anticipated that the first projects will initiate a new series of cross-national research partnerships. The deadline for proposals is **September 1, 1998**.

NIJ is streamlining its process to accommodate the volume of proposals anticipated under this and other solicitations. Researchers can help in a significant way by sending NIJ a nonbinding letter of intent by June 30, 1998. The Institute will use these letters to forecast the numbers of peer panels it needs and to identify conflicts of interest among potential reviewers. There are two ways to send these letters. You can reach NIJ by Internet by sending e-mail to *tellnij@ncjrs.org* and identifying the solicitation and section(s) you expect to apply for. You can write a letter with the same information to "NIJ Request for Proposals for Comparative, Cross-National Crime Research Challenge Grants," 810 Seventh Street N.W., Washington, DC 20531. Help us help you.

II. Background

Nature of the Problem

Over the past decade, several crime problems of an international criminal justice character have emerged. With decreases in barriers of language, communication, information and technology transfer and mobility, and the ever increasing globalization of the economy, there has been a growing trans-national character of organized, financial, sex-related, immigration, and computer crime. In an effort to address bilateral and multilateral interests, U.S. law enforcement agencies at all levels have forged new partnerships with their counterparts abroad.

In his October 1995 speech to the United Nations General Assembly, President Clinton announced several international anti-crime initiatives designed to promote the security of citizens in all countries; to prevent and deter money laundering, entry and immigration of organized crime figures, and commercial and financial dealings of foreign narcotics traffickers; and finally, to facilitate international legislative and policy development.

According to the U.S. Department of State¹

- ▶ the illicit drug trade in the United States generates an estimated \$50–100 billion a year for criminals;
- ▶ of the approximately 1.5 million U.S. vehicles stolen each year, several hundred thousand are illegally exported out of the country to Central America and Eastern Europe;

¹ Source: Office of International Criminal Justice, U.S. Department of State, Bureau For International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (See <http://www.ncjrs.org/intloicj.htm#response>)

- ▶ as many as 100,000 illegal Chinese immigrants have been smuggled into the United States in the past two years, along with hundreds of thousands of immigrants from other countries;
- ▶ approximately \$100 billion in U.S. currency is laundered annually utilizing U.S. financial institutions.

Given that these phenomena cross borders, organizational responses span many levels of government and national boundaries, and the task of measuring these problems and developing and evaluating responses is complex.

In addition to shared interests among nations in stemming the tide of trans-national crime, nations are increasingly recognizing a further shared interest in better understanding the common and different causes of crime problems that are similar across many nations, and developing responses that can be applied to such crime problems.

For example, violent juvenile crime was once recognized as a uniquely U.S. phenomenon. In 1995, persons aged 17–19 made up 11 percent of all murder and non-negligent manslaughter victims.² During the five year period between 1991 and 1995, white and black males 14 to 17 years of age made up 2.2 and 3.4 percent, respectively, of all homicide (murder and non-negligent manslaughter) victims in the United States, and white and black males 14–17 years of age made up 4.8 and 8.7 percent of all homicide arrests. Meanwhile, these two group only made up 3.3 and .05 percent, respectively, of the overall population during this period of time.³ In 1995, juvenile arrests made up 14.1 percent of all violent crime arrests, and 25 percent of all property crime arrests.⁴

In the last decade, however, rising juvenile crime rates have been recognized as a problem in many other nations. Between 1984 and 1995, German

police registered violent crimes rose 107.4 percent among “Juveniles”(aged 14 and under 18 in Germany), 58.9 percent among “young adults” (19 and under 21), and 35.2 percent among 21 to 24 year olds.⁵ In England & Wales, between 1990 and 1994, robbery and violent crimes against the person, juvenile crime (as measured by arrest rates) have risen by 59.1 percent and 26.2 percent respectively.⁶ In France, the number of juveniles (persons between 10 and 18 years) registered by the police for robbery between 1974 and 1992 rose 33.39 percent, and the number of juveniles (in the same age group) registered for violent crimes rose 143.2 percent during the same time period.⁷ Similar figures for juvenile offenders are on the increase through most of Europe.⁸ There are many unanswered questions, such as whether differences and commonalities across these and other crimes are measurement artifacts or indicators of similar and diverging etiologies.

The same question can be asked of comparisons, similarities, and differences in the incidence of domestic violence and violence against women. For example, if different rates are reported across many countries, are these the product of definitional differences, changes in operational definitions for these phenomena, or different etiologies. For example, during a recent research endeavor on homicide, U.S. investigators struggled with FBI data to construct a valid measure with which to compare rates of domestic homicides across U.S. cities.⁹ The investigators chose ultimately to look only at homicides where the victim offender relationship was known, and known to be intimate or family. Even such a straightforward method is fraught with problems, including the difference across cities within the United States in the extent to which homicides cases remain uncleared. In

² Crime in the United States, FBI, U.S. Department of Justice, as found in the Source book of Criminal Justice Statistics, 1997, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, page 336, table 3.125.

³ Ibid, p. 341, table 3.134.

⁴ Ibid, p 402, table 4.23.

⁵ Pfeiffer, Christian. (1997). "Juvenile Crime and Juvenile Violence in European Countries." Germany: Kriminologisches Forschungsinstitut von Niedersachsen, p13.

⁶ Ibid, p33, as cited from the Criminal Statistics series from the British Home Office.

⁷ Ibid., p26.

⁸ See Pfeiffer, Christian. (1997). "Juvenile Crime and Juvenile Violence in European Countries." Germany: Kriminologisches Forschungsinstitut von Niedersachsen

⁹ Homicide in Eight U.S. Cities, Lattimore, Trudeau, Riley, Leiter and Edwards, 1997. National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice.

examining domestic homicides across nations, is the same true between European cities? In European cities in comparison to Asian cities? If so how, and what are the implications for understanding the extent of domestic homicide and its causes.

Measures of police integrity and police corruption should also be expected to vary significantly from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and from country to country, due to reporting and measurement differences, regardless of any real differences in the incidence of these phenomena. Nevertheless, police corruption is increasingly recognized as a critical topic to nations besides the United States. Citizens and policymakers alike are concerned over the incidence of police corruption in their countries, the comparative incidence of such, and the effects of remedial measures.

Firearms research is arguably susceptible to some of the same measurement and reporting problems, in particular with respect to non-fatal shootings. Firearms research continues to generate significant interest in Canada, England, France, etc., due in part to recently increasing trends in crimes, and homicides in particular, involving firearms. In the United States, 68 percent of all murder and non-negligent homicides occurring during 1995 involved the use of a firearm (and this figure has been relatively stable since 1980 – 62 percent).¹⁰

A recurring problem in estimating the degree to which all of these phenomena are common or distinct across national boundaries, however, is in finding common units with which to measure the phenomena in the first place. Even terms such as “juvenile” and “domestic” have meanings which vary across border, time, and culture, making the science of comparison more complex. In the United States, the term “juvenile” is commonly understood to mean less than 18 years of age. However, persons younger than 18 years are not necessarily adjudicated as juveniles; in many U.S. states, violent juveniles are increasingly prosecuted as adults. In England and Wales, the Home Office reports figures for “young adults” which apply to 17 to 20 year olds

prior to 1993, and 18 to 20 year olds from 1993 on.¹¹

In order to better understand these issues and thereby lend support through its core strengths and capabilities, NIJ is expanding its outreach to the international criminal justice research community. NIJ recognizes that there is an increasing need to understand and address issues of criminal behavior as they manifest themselves in similar forms across national boundaries, and in trans-national criminal activity. More specifically, NIJ recognizes the need to support research in these areas, and to disseminate these findings. The purpose of this solicitation is to support comparative and cross-national research that addresses the rapidly changing, expanding, and increasingly complex nature of crime across the globe. NIJ will support the U.S. portion of such comparative studies with NIJ funds, and is challenging researchers to develop additional sources of funding to support the non-U.S. portion of the research.

III. Areas of Research Required

To complement other research efforts underway, NIJ seeks to stimulate comparative research projects through a Comparative Challenge Grant Program. The proposed research should focus on key research questions on crime and criminal behavior that are of importance to both U.S. and international researchers and policymakers. The purpose of the challenge grant program is to challenge U.S. researchers and their counterparts in other countries to conduct joint comparative studies.

These projects should be designed to assess, describe, and understand crime and criminal behavior across several nations, including the United States.

Researchers located at U.S. institutions are encouraged to forge relationships with researchers located at institutions in other countries, such that

¹⁰ SourceBook of Criminal Justice Statistics, 1997, p332, table 3.121.

¹¹ Pfeiffer, Christian. (1997). "Juvenile Crime and Juvenile Violence in European Countries." Germany: Kriminologisches Forschungsinstitut von Niedersachsen, p6.

co-principal investigators jointly conduct research utilizing U.S. and foreign sites. Proposals must include not only clearly delineated testable hypotheses, but also strong rationales for site selection and why both U.S. and foreign sites are required to analyze particular hypotheses. Replications of prior research are also encouraged, but the strong comparative site rationalizations must be present. Funding will not be granted for projects in which research has already been completed; for example, if a U.S. site has been finished and a non-U.S. researcher is looking for funding to do a matching site, or vice versa.

NIJ is also very interested in supporting international comparative research that draws upon existing databases, including, but not limited to, those which are archived in the United States at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (see <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD> to access the archive on-line). Applicants interested in comparative international secondary data analyses are also strongly encouraged to apply for support, under the “Data Resources Program Funding for the Analysis of Existing Data” (see <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>).

IV. Applications

Although U.S. based researchers selected under this solicitation will be funded through NIJ to conduct the U.S. portion of the research, partner(s) at non-U.S. sites must secure their own source(s) of support to conduct research outside the U.S. Consequently a letter of intent or agreement from the funding source for the non-U.S. portion of the research is an important component of the application and will weigh heavily in NIJ’s decision whether or not to fund the proposal. Proposals must also address protection of human subjects issues for research to be conducted in both the U.S. and non-U.S. sites.

Proposals should identify the U.S. based and non-U.S. based researchers and research institutions, and provide curriculum vitae for both researchers and statements of organizational capacity for both U.S. and non-U.S. research institutions. The proposal

should also include plans for the simultaneous conduct of the research in all sites, and for the dissemination of the findings in both the U.S. and abroad . **NIJ intends to support up to five research challenge grants to conduct the U.S. part of the research effort, for a total of up to \$500,000. Proposals are due September 1, 1998.**

V. 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

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- ▶ 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. The number of pages in the “Program Narrative” part of the proposal must not exceed 30 (double-spaced pages) for awards greater than \$50,000; for smaller awards (under \$50,000), the maximum page length is 15 (double-spaced pages).

Due date. Completed proposals **must be received** at the National Institute of Justice by the close of business on September 1, 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 **1–5** grants under this solicitation.

Award amount. Awards totaling **\$500,000** 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:

- Access the Justice Information Center on the web:

<http://www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.htm#NIJ>

or the NIJ web site:

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/NIJ/funding.htm>

These web sites offer the NIJ application forms and guidelines 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:

NIJ Request for Proposals for Comparative,
Cross-National Crime Research Challenge Grants
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 NCJRS Justice Information Center web site (<http://www.ncjrs.org>) or the NIJ web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>).

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

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