



---

# National Institute of Justice

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

*Sarah V. Hart, Director*

*August 2001*

### **Solicitation for Research and Evaluation in Corrections, 2001**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE:**

~~November 16, 2001~~

**Revised Deadline: January 16, 2002**

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

**John D. Ashcroft**  
*Attorney General*

**Sarah V. Hart**  
*Director, National Institute of Justice*

---

For grant and funding information, contact:  
**Department of Justice Response Center**  
800-421-6770

---

**Office of Justice Programs**  
**Web Site:**  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>

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

---

## Solicitation for Research and Evaluation in Corrections, 2001

### I. Introduction

In collaboration with the Office of Justice Programs' Corrections Program Office (CPO), the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) seeks proposals to conduct research and evaluation in the area of corrections. Since 1996, NIJ has issued a number of solicitations through its partnership with the CPO to conduct research on the implementation and impact of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, as amended. These solicitations have covered activities authorized under Title II, Subtitle A of the Act—the Violent Offender Incarceration and Truth-in-Sentencing (VOI/TIS) Incentive Grant Program and the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment for State Prisoners (RSAT) Formula Grant Program (created by Subtitle U).

#### Letter of Intent

To facilitate the processing of applications, researchers are asked to submit a nonbinding letter of intent briefly describing their proposed research by **November 1, 2001**. The Institute will use these letters to plan for peer review panels in each topic area and to identify conflicts of interest among potential reviewers. Letters may be submitted in either of two ways. You can reach NIJ by sending an e-mail to [tellnij@ncjrs.org](mailto:tellnij@ncjrs.org) and identifying this solicitation as the one to which you expect to apply. You may also send the information to *Solicitation for Research and Evaluation in Corrections, 2001*, National Institute of Justice, ORE, 810 Seventh Street

This solicitation will provide up to \$1.5 million to support a limited number of projects, not to exceed \$750,000 each, to conduct research and evaluation in corrections. Applications are sought for research and evaluation that focus on topics of current interest in the area of adult correctional management. These topics include, but are not limited to:

- The management of violent offenders in correctional institutions and systems
- The management and treatment of special populations, such as sex offenders, inmates with mental illnesses, female inmates, and juveniles in adult correctional systems
- Problems and issues in the effectiveness of substance abuse treatment programs and other treatment programs in influencing offenders' behavior or the role of treatment programs in the operation of correctional institutions
- Recent trends in the size and composition of correctional populations and their effects on the operations and management of correctional systems.

Of particular interest are studies using multilevel approaches that address institutional factors and organizational processes, individual-level influences and responses of actors in the system, and the social and cultural context within which they operate. Researchers may want to assess the direct and indirect effects of correctional policies and programs, including those that were intended and those that were unintended.

## II. Background—Crime Act Corrections Research

The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 advanced a multifaceted approach to violent crime, including changes in Federal penalties for crime and the establishment of incentive programs for State and local jurisdictions. The CPO administers the VOI/TIS grant program and the RSAT formula grant program. A portion of the funds authorized under VOI/TIS and RSAT has been set aside for NIJ to assess and evaluate these programs and to research major issues in the area of corrections. The aim of this research and evaluations is to improve the ability of the States and tribal jurisdictions to achieve the goals of the programs.

The VOI/TIS and RSAT programs each has specific goals. VOI/TIS makes funds available to the States to expand correctional facilities to increase the likelihood that convicted violent offenders will serve time in prison and that the amount of time served (as a proportion of sentence length) will increase. Funds can be used to build or expand correctional facilities for violent offenders, or can be used for the same purpose for nonviolent offenders as a way to free space for violent offenders. Funds can also be used to build or expand jails for these purposes. Funds may also be used for privatization to achieve these purposes.

The RSAT program was created to provide funding for the development of substance abuse treatment programs in State and local correctional facilities. States were encouraged to adopt comprehensive approaches to substance abuse treatment for offenders, including relapse prevention and aftercare.

## A. Areas of Interest

In collaboration with the CPO and in consultation with correctional policymakers, practitioners, and researchers, NIJ continues to identify key research questions and policy needs that should be addressed by the research community. The goal is to maximize the lessons learned from projects funded under the 1994 Crime Act and to provide feedback to State, local, and tribal jurisdictions on strategies for addressing changes in sentencing policy. Through this process, a number of areas currently of interest to the field of corrections have been identified. While proposals on other issues in corrections will receive full consideration based on their substantive and scientific merit, the issues discussed here have been assigned high priority.

### 1. Managing Violent Offenders

One such area of research interest is the evaluation of strategies for managing violent offenders in adult correctional facilities. Research proposals in this area should take into account the effect of these strategies both on managing the risk of violence and on the operations of prisons and prison systems. Proposals for research on innovative treatment or other programs designed to influence aggressive behavior are also sought.

A number of other questions in the area of violence might also be examined. These include:

- The impact on the correctional system as a whole of different techniques to classify inmates for risk of violence
- The operational costs of different approaches to classifying inmates for risk of violence
- The effects of the use of “super-max” units or facilities on correctional systems.

- The influence of staff discretion or attitudes on disciplinary practices
- The implications for operations of prisons of proactive violence prevention strategies
- The influence of gangs in institutional operations, or the consequences, both intended and unintended, of efforts to control gangs or encourage inmates to renounce gang membership.

## **2. Special Populations**

Also of interest is research in the broad area of managing and treating special populations, including sex offenders, offenders with mental illnesses, women, and juvenile offenders in adult correctional systems. The use of specialized approaches to substance abuse treatment for specific populations and/or the co-occurrence of substance abuse with other conditions also is of interest. Other important topics in this area include assessment, intensity of treatment, risk management, and transition or reentry. Research in this area should also focus on the costs and benefits of the mix of various custodial and treatment approaches for managing special populations, including the most effective combination of sanctions and incentives.

## **3. Substance Abuse Treatment and Other Programs**

In the same manner, research on the use of substance abuse treatment or other programs to influence offender behavior may examine the efficacy of these strategies in terms of the interaction between such programs and the institutions in which they are housed or the communities in which they operate. This research might investigate such issues as the effect of institutional operations on the viability and effectiveness of programs in prisons.

Of additional interest is research on the roles of and interactions between treatment and custody staff and how the balance of custody/supervision and rehabilitation influences programming. Of particular interest here is research on factors affecting inmates' responsiveness to different treatment modalities. These include cognitive factors and their influence on treatment engagement and success, and the interaction of sanctions or incentives in influencing offenders' motivation for and success in treatment programs.

## **4. Effects of Sentencing on Corrections**

Finally, there is continuing interest in studies of the effects of different sentencing strategies or initiatives on corrections. One relevant issue might be changes in the size and composition of correctional populations and their effect on the management of correctional systems.

## **5. Broad-based Studies**

Also of interest are comparative studies, among jurisdiction, of trends in the role of corrections in the criminal justice system and in American society. Such research might focus on the impact of changing revocation rates on correctional management, the effect of higher incarceration rates and longer length of stay on inmates' families and communities, and the function of changing public opinion in forming public policy.

## **B. Partnerships Encouraged**

The CPO and NIJ particularly wish to encourage partnerships between researchers and practitioners in research projects. Genuine collaboration is an essential element of a researcher-practitioner partnership. Thus, applications should address how they will manage such activities as problem definition; development of assessment tools; data collection; and issues of privacy, confidentiality, and the use of human subjects.

Before proposing the development of new assessment techniques and data collection instruments, applicants should seek to build on previous research by examining those that have already proven useful in correctional settings. Finally, while a proposed partnership should have State or local utility, it should also have implications for knowledge-building at the national level.

NIJ encourages researchers from all disciplines to explore the opportunities for collaboration proposed in this solicitation.

### III. Selection Criteria

NIJ is firmly committed to a competitive process in awarding grants. Peer review panelists consider both technical and programmatic merits of a proposed topic. Successful applicants must demonstrate to an independent peer review panel that 1) what they seek to fill in the knowledge gap is critical to understanding correctional issues and is policy relevant; 2) the proposed research design is rigorous and appropriate to the posited research questions; and 3) the principal investigators are highly qualified to execute the design within the proposed budget and time lines.

NIJ and CPO staff make recommendations to the NIJ Director based on the results of the independent reviews. Final decisions are made by the NIJ Director. Reviews of grant applications are based on the following criteria:

#### ■ Impact of the Project

- Importance of the problem
- Potential for significant advances in the area of corrections
- Potential for advancing scientific understanding of the problem area

- Relevance to improving the policy and practice of corrections or related agencies and for enhancing public safety and security and the quality of life of communities.

#### ■ Quality and Technical Merit

- Awareness of existing research
- Soundness of methodology and of analytic or technical approach
- Innovation and creativity of the proposed research
- Feasibility of proposed project and awareness of possible pitfalls.

#### ■ Capabilities, Demonstrated Productivity, and Experience of Applicants

- Qualifications and experience of personnel to undertake the proposed project
- Demonstrated ability to manage the proposed project
- Adequacy of proposed budget, including time and personnel
- Quality and timeliness of past performance on NIJ grants and contracts.

#### ■ Budget and Timing Considerations

- Total cost relative to perceived benefit
- Appropriateness of budget to level of effort
- Realistic time line, including definition of major milestones in the proposed project
- Use of existing resources to conserve costs.

The review process—including peer review, decision-making and other considerations—may take up to six months to complete. Notices of award and nonaward are sent to applicants simultaneously, about 180 days after the closing date of a solicitation.

## IV. How to Apply

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

### Part A

- Application for Federal Assistance—Standard Form (SF) 424
- Topics Designation Form
- **Proposal abstract**
- Table of contents
- Budget Detail Worksheet
- Budget narrative
- Negotiated indirect rate agreement (if appropriate)
- **Program narrative**
- References
- Names and affiliations of all key persons, including applicants and subcontractor(s), advisors, consultants, and advisory board members. Include name of principal investigator, title, organizational affiliation, department (if institution of higher education), address, phone, fax, and email address.
- List of previous NIJ awards (including grant numbers), grant status, and grant products (especially those due or already submitted to NIJ), and publications by NIJ or other publisher resulting from the grant.

### Part B

- Privacy certificate
- Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/Certification/Declaration (Form 310)
- Environmental Assessment (if required)
- Geographic Areas Affected Worksheet
- Assurances
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (one form)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Appendixes:
  - Letters of cooperation from organizations collaborating in the research project
  - Résumés
  - Other materials.

**Application for Assistance.** Standard Form 424 should be the first page of the application. Please follow the instructions in completing this form.

In item 10 of Standard Form 424, be sure to include “16.560” as the Catalog for Federal Domestic Assistance number. The title is “Solicitation for Research and Evaluation in Corrections, 2001.” Enter the title of your proposal in Item 11. The start and end dates of the project (in Item 13) should be adjusted to accommodate a six-month grant-approval process. Please make all start dates *after April 1, 2002*.

**Proposal Abstract.** The proposal abstract is a very important part of the application. Along with the Topics Designation Form, the abstract is used to sort applications for appropriate peer review. Once an award has been granted, the abstract is converted to electronic format and serves as a summary, available to all interested parties, for the duration of the grant. When read separately from the rest of the application, the abstract should serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants should concisely

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

describe research goals and objectives, research design, and methods for achieving the goals and objectives. Abstract length is not to exceed 400 words.

Use the following two headers and instructions to assist in developing the abstract:

## 1. Research Goals and Objectives

**Statement of Purpose.** State the problem to be investigated, including goals and objectives of the proposed research project, and anticipated relevance of the project to public policy and/or practice.

**Research Subjects.** If applicable, describe the subjects who will be involved in the proposed project, including the number of participants, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and other pertinent information (such as how you will gain access to participants).

## 2. Proposed Research Design and Methodology

**Methods.** Describe the research method and/or design, including data to be used, data collection procedures and instrumentation, secondary data analysis methods, and other methods or procedures unique to the proposed study.

**Data Analysis and Products.** Describe proposed techniques for data analysis and all expected products, including final reports, data to be archived, and instrumentation.

**Program Narrative.** The program narrative should provide information in enough detail to adequately describe the proposed project. It should include:

- Purpose, goals, and objectives
- Review of relevant literature

- Methodology
- Anticipated results and products
- Staff/management plan
- Tables, charts, figures and research time line (these do not count against page limit).

The project time line should identify the major milestones in the proposed project and will be used to assist in project monitoring.

**Page Limit.** The number of pages in the “Program Narrative” section of the application must not exceed thirty (30) and must be double-spaced, in 12-point font, with one-inch margins. Tables, charts and figures are encouraged and will not be counted in the 30-page limit.

**Due Date.** Ten (10) copies (one unbound) of complete proposals **must be received at the National Institute of Justice by 5:00 p.m. on January 16, 2002.** Extensions of this deadline are not permitted. Faxed or electronically transmitted copies will not be accepted. NIJ reserves the right to return incomplete applications, those not responsive to the scope of this solicitation, or those not complying with format requirements.

Names and affiliations of the author(s) of the proposal should be clearly identified. Proposals that are incorrectly collated, incomplete, or handwritten will be considered as submitted or, at NIJ's discretion, will be returned without further review. Proposals exceeding the page limit may not be reviewed. No additions to the original submission are allowed.

**Application Materials.** Applicants should obtain two items: 1) application forms (including a sample budget worksheet) and 2) *Guidelines for Submitting Proposals for National Institute of Justice–Sponsored Research* (which spells out requirements for proposal writers and also the expectations of grant recipients). To receive them, applicants can:

- Access the NIJ Web site and download application information:  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>.
- Request hard copies of the forms and guidelines by mail from NCJRS (800–851–3420) or from the Department of Justice Response Center (800–421–6770 or, in the Washington, D.C., area, 202–307–1480).
- Request copies by fax. Call 800–851–3420 and select option 1, then option 1 again for NIJ. Code is 1023.
- **Please note that where there are differences between the instructions in this solicitation and those outlined in *Guidelines for Submitting Proposals for National Institute of Justice–Sponsored Research*, the instructions in this solicitation supersede the *Guidelines*.**

## V. Guidelines for Grantees

NIJ has established guidelines for grant recipients regarding deliverables such as final reports and data sets. **Ninety (90) days before the grant’s end date**, grantees are expected to submit in draft form a 400-word abstract, a 2,500-word executive summary, and a technical research report.

---

### Final Deliverables

- Abstract (400 words)
- Executive summary (2,500 words)
- Technical report
- Data and supporting documentation

---

Each of these final deliverable products is an important part of NIJ’s efforts to disseminate the results of research and preserve each project’s

contribution to building knowledge. The project **abstract** may appear in NIJ publications as a way to call attention to noteworthy projects. The abstract should be a succinct description of the completed research and concisely describe the topic, methodology, and major findings. The **executive summary** should be suitable for distribution as a stand-alone document to a general audience of policymakers, practitioners, and researchers. It should discuss the background of the project, include an overview of the research design and procedures, and review the findings and discuss their relevance. The **technical report** is intended to convey a description of the research project in detail sufficient to allow other researchers to assess it independently and replicate the work. There is no limit on the length of the technical report; researchers are encouraged to document their research project in detail, including presentation of data collections instruments, manuals, and other essential documentation. Finally, grant recipients must submit all **data sets** used in producing the study and final report, together with whatever technical documentation is necessary to enable its use.

All NIJ draft technical reports are peer reviewed upon submission. The reviews are forwarded to the principal investigator with suggestions for revisions. The principal investigator must then submit the revised final technical report, abstract, executive summary, final data set, and codebook/data dictionary by the end date of the grant. The abstract, executive summary, and final technical report must be submitted in both paper form and electronically. The data set and codebook/dictionary are also to be submitted in electronic form.

Data sets must be received by the end date of the grant. Grant applicants should ensure that the proposed time line accommodates these requirements. Further, the proposed budget should adequately address these requirements.

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

In addition to the abstract, executive summary, technical report, and data set, grantees must submit quarterly financial status reports and semi-annual progress reports. These are described below.

## **Financial Status Reports**

Financial status reports (form SF 269-A) are to be submitted quarterly, no later than 45 days after the end of each calendar quarter. Two copies of these reports must be submitted to the Office of the Comptroller, Office of Justice Programs, every quarter during which the award is active even if there has been no financial activity during the reporting period.

Additionally, a final financial report is due 120 days after the end date of the award. Future awards and fund drawdowns will be withheld if financial status reports are delinquent.

## **Semi-annual Progress Reports**

Grant recipients are also required to submit semi-annual “Categorical Assistance Progress Reports.” Two copies of these progress reports must be submitted to the Office of the Comptroller, Office of Justice Programs, twice a year even if there has been no substantive activity during the reporting period. The progress report should describe activities during the reporting period and the status of or accomplishment of objectives as set forth in the approved application for funding. For the duration of the award, progress reports must be submitted within 30 days after the end of the reporting periods (January 1 through June 30 and July 1 through December 31).

A final progress report, which summarizes achievement of the goals and objectives of the award, significant findings, and any products developed under the award, is due 90 days after the end date of the award. Future awards and

fund drawdowns may be withheld if progress reports are delinquent and/or if major milestones in the project are not met.

Forms for submitting financial and progress reports are available at the NIJ Web site. Report forms will also be provided by the Office of Justice Programs at the time the grant is awarded.

---

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION AND HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION**

NIJ has adopted new policies and procedures regarding confidentiality of information and human subjects protection.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) regulations at 28 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 22 require recipients of NIJ research funds to protect personally identifiable information that is collected from all research participants. The regulations at 28 CFR Part 22 require applicants for NIJ funding to outline specific procedures for protection of private information about individuals as part of the Privacy Certificate submitted with the application package.

In addition to the regulations in Part 22, DOJ has adopted policies on protection of human subjects that are the same as those established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 45 CFR Part 46, Subpart A (also known as the “Common Rule”).

The DOJ regulations are set forth in 28 CFR Part 46. In general, 28 CFR Part 46 requires that all research involving human subjects conducted or supported by a Federal department or agency be reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) before Federal funds are expended for that research. If IRB approval is required for the proposed project, a copy of the IRB’s approval as well as supporting documentation of the IRB’s institutional affiliation, its policies and procedures,

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

and necessary assurances must be submitted to the National Institute of Justice before the start of any research activities that are not exempt from the provisions of 28 CFR Part 46.

Further information regarding confidentiality of information and human subjects protection is in *Guidelines for Submitting Proposals for National Institute of Justice-Sponsored Research*.

---

**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.

**Send applications to:**

Office of Research and Evaluation  
Solicitation for Research in Corrections, 2001  
National Institute of Justice  
810 Seventh Street N.W.  
Washington, DC 20531  
[overnight courier ZIP code 20001]

## Other NIJ Solicitations

This solicitation for research and evaluation on corrections is only one of many requests for proposals issued by NIJ in this and related areas. Other NIJ solicitations are announced throughout the year on NIJ's Web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>) and on the Justice Information Center Web site (<http://www.ncjrs.org>). Prospective applicants may also contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) at 800-851-3420 or e-mail [askncjrs@ncjrs.org](mailto:askncjrs@ncjrs.org) to receive pending release and announcement dates.

This document is not intended to create, does not create, and may not be relied upon to create any rights, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by any party in any matter civil or criminal.

SL000492

For more information about the National Institute of Justice, contact:

**National Criminal Justice Reference Service**

Box 6000

Rockville, MD 20849-6000

800-851-3420

email: [askncjrs@ncjrs.org](mailto: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>).

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
Office of Justice Programs  
*National Institute of Justice*

*Washington, DC 20531*

---

