



National Institute of Justice

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

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Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships: Evaluations of Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies for Domestic Violence

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

June 30, 1999

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Office of Justice Programs
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Washington, DC 20531

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Department of Justice Response Center:
800-421-6770

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World Wide Web Site:
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>

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

Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships: Evaluations of Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies for Domestic Violence

I. Introduction

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ), in collaboration with the Office of Justice Programs' Violence Against Women Office (VAWO), is soliciting proposals for researcher-practitioner partnerships to evaluate practitioner collaborations through the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The purpose of these researcher-practitioner partnerships is to provide jurisdictions receiving funds under the Grants to Encourage Arrest with the resources to implement *locally based* evaluations that are responsive to the needs of the jurisdiction and that contribute to our understanding of the issues nationally. Specifically, this solicitation provides support for locally conducted process evaluations of projects supported by the Grants to Encourage Arrest. The process evaluations should provide a thorough descriptive analysis of the issues being addressed by the project and the activities undertaken in formulating the project.

Contingent upon continued appropriations in the future and NIJ's receipt of funding, a subsequent solicitation will request proposals from applicants who have been previously awarded a local process evaluation to conduct outcome/impact evaluations. Outcome evaluations will measure the effects of a program against the goals it set out to accomplish.

The researcher-practitioner process evaluations will be funded at up to \$75,000 each for up to 18 months. It is anticipated that up to six awards will be made available for evaluations in individual jurisdictions. The evaluation teams should include researchers, practitioners and victim advocates. The teams may focus on issues related to any of the program purposes or

the Special Interest Categories of the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies described below. The evaluations will be supported by cooperative agreements between the grantee and NIJ. NIJ, with input from VAWO, will consult with awardees concerning the nature of the collaboration, the specific research issue to be addressed as part of the collaboration, research approach, and other factors.

II. Background

Title IV of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 is the Violence Against Women Act. The Act responds to the needs of millions of women who are the victims of violence each year. It also responds to the need for fundamental changes in addressing violence against women from diverse, traditionally underserved populations, including women of color, immigrant women, disabled women, women in same-sex relationships, and elderly women.

The Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies is authorized under Chapter 3, part U of the Violence Against Women Act. For fiscal year (FY) 1999, Congress appropriated \$34 million to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs for the program, which is being administered by VAWO. The purpose of this program is to encourage States, Indian tribal governments, and units of local government to treat domestic violence as a serious violation of criminal law. The program assumes that the arrest of a batterer will leverage the coercive and persuasive power of the criminal justice system to ensure victim safety and manage the behavior of abusive, violent offenders.

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The Violence Against Women Act directs that Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies be used to:

- Implement mandatory arrest or pro-arrest programs and policies in police departments, including mandatory arrest programs or pro-arrest programs and policies for protection order violations;
- Develop policies and training programs in police departments and other criminal justice agencies to improve tracking of cases involving domestic violence;
- Centralize and coordinate police enforcement, prosecution, probation, parole or judicial responsibility of cases in groups or units of police officers, prosecutors, probation and parole officers or judges;
- Coordinate computer tracking systems to ensure communication between police, prosecutors, and both criminal and family courts;
- Strengthen legal advocacy service programs for victims of domestic violence by providing complete information and support for a victim of domestic violence as the case against her abuser moves through the criminal justice system; and
- Educate judges and others responsible for handling domestic violence cases, in criminal, tribal, and other courts about domestic violence to ensure victim safety and offender accountability through proactive judicial management.

The Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies funds are also being used to support promising approaches that respond to domestic violence within the Special Interest Categories outlined below.

- Enforcement of protection orders and implementation of the full faith and credit

provision of the Violence Against Women Act.

- Domestic violence courts that employ frequent and proactive judicial monitoring, sanctions, and intensive supervision to manage offender behavior and ensure victim safety.
- Community-driven initiatives to address violence against women among diverse, traditionally underserved populations.
- Partnerships between the business community and the criminal justice system to enhance the safety of women in the community.
- Community policing to reduce and prevent violence against women.
- Initiatives within police departments to address the problem of police officers who are perpetrators of domestic violence.
- Collaboration among advocates working with victims of domestic violence, domestic violence programs, child protection services agencies, and criminal justice agencies to provide support and resources to battered women and their children.
- The development and implementation of coordinated initiatives to address incidents of stalking occurring in a domestic violence context.

Currently, the Violence Against Women Office has 183 grants under the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies Program.

Further information about the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies is available on VAWO's web page. The Office's web page address is: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawgo>. Information regarding the program can also be

obtained from the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770, or in the Washington, D.C. area at 202-307-1480.

III. Areas of Research Required

Proposals are solicited for researcher-practitioner partnerships to conduct process evaluations of specific programs or initiatives falling under any of the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies program purposes or Special Interest Categories. *It is anticipated that up to 6 awards will be made available for local process evaluations in individual jurisdictions. Each of these evaluations will be funded for up to \$75,000 for a period of up to 18 months.* The applicant may be either an advocacy group, practitioner agency, research organization, or an academic institution.

The process evaluations must address partnerships between advocates and criminal justice practitioners who are implementing local initiatives through the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies. To the extent possible, abused women, survivors of domestic violence, and other knowledgeable and relevant community members should be involved in the evaluation design and process. The process evaluation should describe the approach the jurisdiction has taken to achieve a coordinated community response to domestic violence; and document the history of the collaborative relationship among the practitioner partners.

In addition to the requirements mentioned above, a proposal for the local process evaluation should include descriptions of each of the following components: the composition and functioning of the researcher-practitioner partnership, the research issues that will be addressed and research approaches that will be used, and sustainability of the researcher-practitioner collaboration once Federal funding has ended. Each of these components is described in detail, below.

Partnership Composition

At a minimum, the research-practitioner collaboration **must** include criminal justice officials; nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations serving victims of domestic violence; victim advocates; and a researcher. The researcher **must** have experience in conducting studies on domestic violence. Because understanding the demographic and cultural dimensions of the affected jurisdiction is important to problem identification, development and implementation of strategies to address the issue presented, performance measures developed for programmatic assessment, and interpretation of evaluation findings, the researcher needs to be locally-based. In addition, the necessity of regular meetings between the researcher and practitioners on a limited budget requires a locally-based researcher. Locally-based should be interpreted as being within the affected jurisdiction or a neighboring jurisdiction.

Beyond these requirements the composition of the partnership is not limited. A critical element of the application is that it reflect a genuine collaboration regardless of who may have initiated the effort. The application must clearly demonstrate a commitment to the research-practitioner partnership on the part of all parties involved.

Functioning of the Partnership

Specifying the role of each member of the researcher-practitioner partnership is important in ensuring high quality and technically feasible proposals. The basic partnership concept is that a researcher will work cooperatively with criminal justice officials, victim services providers, advocates, and abused women and survivors to develop data-driven testable solutions and evaluations. If criminal justice officials, service providers and advocates 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. If researchers are to understand what goals and purposes service providers, advocates, and criminal justice officials seek to achieve and what measures of success will be credible, researchers must work closely with service providers, advocates, and criminal justice officials. When partners function as equal contributors, skills, responsibility for outcomes, and motivation to fulfill responsibilities will develop to ensure high quality, credible research results.

The ultimate goal of these collaborations is to benefit all parties to the research-practitioner partnerships during and beyond the Federal funding period. The partnerships should provide criminal justice system practitioners, victim service providers and advocates with a resource for policy-relevant program evaluations. The partnerships should also afford researchers the means and opportunity to contribute to the growing body of knowledge that can be used to effectively address violence against women.

Research Issues and Approaches

Applicants are invited to design research-practitioner partnerships that will address issues related to the program purpose areas or Special Interest Categories of the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies. Researchers and practitioners should collaboratively develop the specific research goals and questions that will be addressed as part of the process evaluation. The research questions being proposed should be of priority to the jurisdiction. The knowledge to be gained should have direct application to the affected jurisdictions.

Applicants may propose several research issues and research approaches to the process evaluation. Subsequently, one of these research issues and approaches should be fully developed for the process evaluation.

Proposals should include a time and task outline 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 researcher-practitioner partnership members and ensures that all partners can reasonably expect to accomplish the objectives of the evaluation.

In addition, applicants **must** also include in their proposals a description of how the partnerships will protect the human subjects of the research, and confidentiality of the research data. The human subjects and confidentiality issues **must** be addressed through submission of a privacy certificate required by Federal regulations of all NIJ grantees, and if necessary, approval of the proposal by an Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Since the time allowed to respond to this solicitation is limited and the research partnerships may be newly established, the early stages of the process evaluation will allow for refinement of the research design.

In order to prepare for potential outcome evaluations, process evaluation designs are encouraged to:

- identify some meaningful comparison group if feasible (a comparable group of individuals who have not participated in the project);
- develop and use reliable and valid measurement tools (questionnaires that provide similar results among different populations and contain questions that accurately measure issues of interest); and
- collect essential outcome measures from the beginning (measures that can be used to assess the impact of your program).

Sustainability of the Researcher-Practitioner Partnership

One purpose of the researcher-practitioner collaborations is to encourage an on-going relationship between local criminal justice officials, service providers, advocates, and researchers. In order to ensure that planning has begun to sustain researcher-practitioner 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.

Technical Assistance

All researcher-practitioner partnership teams supported under this solicitation will be required to attend one or two meetings during the course of the grant. The purpose of these meetings is to provide the partners with technical assistance on the process evaluation and the researcher-practitioner collaboration itself. These meetings will also afford the partnership teams the opportunity to learn from one another and domestic violence experts about issues being addressed, strategies adopted, and successes and challenges experienced in responding to domestic violence. The costs of these Federally-sponsored meetings will be covered by additional non-grant funds.

Methodological Considerations. In this solicitation, the need for innovation, particularly on qualitative measures and culturally sensitive measures, and the need for different levels of data is acknowledged. In preparing for subsequent outcome evaluations, measures that go beyond reoffending need to be considered and utilized. New outcome measures could address stress, economic independence, quality of life, offending with a new partner, and victim and community safety. Also, the use of data from a variety of systems (e.g. criminal justice, social services) is encouraged.

Dissemination of Results. NIJ is interested in expeditious and innovative methods to disseminate the results from all projects supported under this solicitation. Methods that would supplement the more traditional forms of dissemination are encouraged. Results of projects are expected to be reported to NIJ as they become available, and, at a minimum, through semi-annual progress reports. Applicants should provide a discussion of the types of reports or products that would become available over the course of the project.

Attendance at an annual meeting for NIJ grantees is required. This meeting provides NIJ grantees the opportunity to present the findings from their projects as well as learn about the other violence against women and family violence research NIJ is supporting. Applicants should budget travel and per diem expenses for a trip to Washington, D.C., for each year of the grant to participate in these grantee meetings.

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. **The budget amount for the entire length of the project must be placed in box 15 of the SF 424.**
- 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

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- 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 approach, 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 June 30, 1999. Extensions of this deadline will not be permitted.

Award period. The award period for these cooperative agreements will be up to 18 months.

Number of awards. NIJ anticipates supporting up to 6 cooperative agreements under this solicitation.

Award amount. Awards totaling up to \$75,000 each will be made available under 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 3 copies (one with original signatures) of completed forms to:

National Institute of Justice
Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships:
Evaluations of Grants to Encourage
Arrest Policies for Domestic Violence
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531
[overnight courier ZIP code 20001]

To find out more information about 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

To obtain an electronic version of this document, access the NIJ web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>).

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

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