



Writing a Successful Grant Application for the 2025 SJS Program

Feb. 3, 2026

SJS Program Goals & Objectives

Goal:

Coordinate statistical activities within the state, **conduct research** as needed, and to assist BJS with **gathering data** within their states

Objectives:

- **Build the capabilities** of states to collect, analyze, and report data on justice issues relevant to the states and the nation.
- **Support the collection and sharing** of vital justice system data among the states, and between the states and the federal government.

Two categories of proposals

As always, BJS accepts two categories of proposed projects:

- Core Capacity-Building Projects
- Special Emphasis Projects

NEW THIS YEAR: An applicant may submit only one application in response to this NOFO. That application can apply to only one category of the NOFO.

Core Capacity-Building Projects

- **Enhancing or building** access to new sources of data
- **Improving capability** to collect, analyze, and interpret data on criminal justice issues

Up to \$75,000/year
(12-36 months)



SJS funds cannot be used to support:

- Maintenance of existing efforts
- Updates of annual or recurring reports unless new methods/data sources are used



Core Capacity-Building Projects

- Must describe current capabilities, how the project will enhance them, and how these enhancements will be sustained
- Final deliverables must be submitted to BJS as part of the final performance report including any other reports, evaluations, or website enhancements
- May include travel funds for up to 2 people to attend up to 2 BJS-approved conferences or meetings. Travel costs can be separate from the funding cap.

NIBRS-Related

**Criminal Justice System
Processes**

Increasing Data Access

Other Capacity Building

Core Capacity: NIBRS/IBR

- A. Research using incident-based crime data compatible with the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

SJS funds may be used to conduct research and analysis that **demonstrates the utility** of using NIBRS-compatible incident-based data for studying criminal justice issues.

Proposed projects should include:

- An assessment and review of data quality
- Final reports must include a thorough discussion of data quality
- Analyses also must result in a report of publishable quality to be disseminated nationally

TOPICAL AREAS OF INTEREST TO BJS

- Hate Crimes
- Crimes committed on tribal lands
- Human trafficking
- Drug-related arrests, especially those involving methamphetamine, opioid, cocaine, or marijuana possession, trafficking, and/or distribution
- Citizenship or legal status of arrestees

Core Capacity: NIBRS/IBR

- One goal of this focus area is to **assess the quality and completeness** of incident-based crime data reported by local law enforcement agencies
- To support this goal, BJS is particularly interested in analyses that -

Examine how LEAs have recorded the relationship(s) between victim(s) and offender(s) for violent offenses

Analyze and evaluate state IBR and/or NIBRS data on property crimes

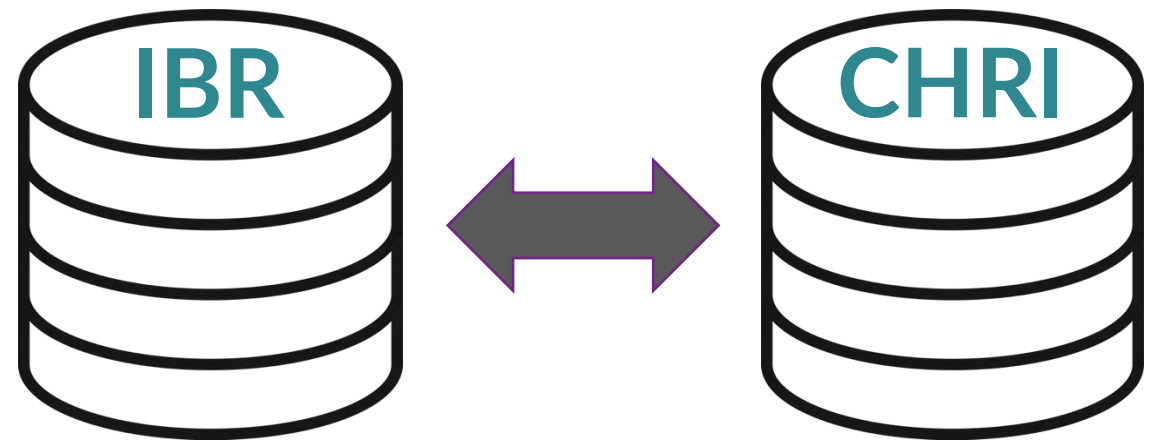
Examine the reporting of simple and aggravated assaults to the state IBR program and/or NIBRS

Compare IBR practices across reporting units in the state over time

Core Capacity: NIBRS/IBR

Proposals may also include projects examining utility of linking incident-based crime reports to criminal history records

- **Must partner** with the state's criminal history record repository
- **Must include** an assessment and review of the quality of the criminal history record information



Core Capacity: Other Core Capacity Building Projects

B. Collecting and Analyzing Data on Criminal Justice System Processes

C. Increase Access to Statistical Data

- Electronic infrastructure development, enhancements, and linkages
- Building or enhancing a website
- Preparing reports for online dissemination

D. Other Capacity Building Projects

- Research examining another topic, provided it builds the SAC's capacity
- Application must include documentation that the subject is a top priority for the state's governor or senior criminal justice policy officials

Special-Emphasis Projects

SACs may also apply for funding for special-emphasis projects that support BJS interests or national priorities in the following areas:

**Up to \$150,000/year
(12-36 months)**

- A. Use of Administrative or Operational Criminal Justice Data
- B. Analysis of State Criminal History Records



Special-Emphasis Projects

A. Use of Administrative or Operational Criminal Justice Data

- Implement new or enhance existing interfaces or data exchange technologies that improve access to data and systems maintained by other state or local entities
- Funds may be used to establish data exchange capacity and/or use existing capacity for targeted research
- Proposed projects
 - *must* include a systematic data quality assessment as a project deliverable, and
 - *should* include a letter of cooperation or support from the operational agency or agencies involved

Special-Emphasis Projects

B. Analyses using state criminal history records to examine:

- Patterns of criminal behavior, such as sex offending, stalking, or domestic violence
- Arrests, prosecutions, and convictions for firearms-related offenses
- The relationship between citizenship or legal status and patterns of criminal behavior (new)
- Recidivism of persons in prison or under community supervision, including rates of rearrest, reconviction, and return to custody
- Linkage of criminal history records to other data sources to explore factors that may affect patterns of offending or recidivism

Special-Emphasis Projects

BJS is particularly interested in analyses that will -

- Assess the accuracy and completeness of CHRI to identify record-improvement strategies
- Explore the feasibility of using the state's CHRI as a source of statewide arrest or booking statistics
- Explore the quality of court and sentencing data to examine felony case filings
- Examine recidivism patterns of convicted offenders using longer observation periods than the traditional 3- or 5-year studies

Special-Emphasis Projects

Application must include an impact statement specifying how the project will support BJS and national priorities

Areas that may be addressed include how project will:

- Support the sharing of state-level information nationally
- Enhance state capability to collect/analyze/interpret data on issues relevant to the states and the nation
- Support or enhance specific BJS data collections
- Involve the state making maximum use of state-level data collected by BJS or other DOJ components to conduct analyses
- Influence state criminal justice policy and practice, including a description of who is interested and how project results will be shared with other entities, SACs, and the public

Special-Emphasis Projects

- BJS encourages **collaboration among the SACs** (i.e., multi-SAC projects), particularly in projects that may leverage one SAC's expertise in another SAC's proposed project to help build capacity
- Final deliverables must be submitted to BJS as part of the final progress report that includes performance measures and any final reports, evaluations, and website enhancements.

Proposals

The Project Design section of the narrative must include a summary paragraph of each project ***identifying the program theme*** for each project and the amount of funds proposed to complete each task. Associate a product or deliverable to each task, such as a report or publication. [modification from previous years]

OJP Priorities (new)

OJP will provide priority consideration for proposals that advance one or more of these goals:

- a) Directly supporting law enforcement operations (including immigration law enforcement operations);
- b) Combatting violent crime;
- c) Supporting services to American citizens;
- d) Protecting American children; and
- e) Supporting American victims of trafficking and sexual assault.

Deliverables

Applications should include the expected deliverables and dissemination strategy.

- All materials and reports drafted or produced using funds under this NOFO must be provided to BJS for review and comment prior to publication.
- Final deliverables (including final project reports, evaluations, and website enhancements) must be included as attachments in the final performance report. Program objectives and deliverables should be included in one timeline.

Performance Measures

- Performance measures shown in the SJS Solicitation (pg.28) are examples for guidance purposes and will not fit each project proposal.
- Each SJS proposal should describe the performance measures that can be ascertained at the time of submission, and specify:
 - How the measurement data will be collected, and by whom
 - How the data will be reported
- Performance measures can be enumerated in a template format like the example in the solicitation or simply described in a narrative.

SJS Solicitation Recap

Anticipated Number of Awards: 38 (up to 15 awards for special-emphasis projects); total funding available is \$3,000,000

Anticipated Maximum Dollar Amount per Award: Awards will be up to \$75,000 for Core-Capacity (timeframe of 12 to 36 months based on the nature of the proposed project(s) and the quality of the supporting strategic plan)

\$150,000 for Special-Emphasis (timeframe 12 to 36 months based on the nature of the proposed project(s) and quality of the supporting justification, although funding may not be available for the full duration of the project in FY 2025)

Period of Performance Duration (Months): 12 to 36 months

Period of Performance Start Date: April 1, 2026

Two-Step Application Process: Deadlines

Grants.gov Application Deadline: 11:59 pm Eastern Time, February 24, 2026

<https://www.grants.gov/>

JustGrants Application Deadline: 8:59 pm Eastern Time, March 3, 2026

<https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/>

NOTE: The federal government previously transitioned from the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) to **Unique Entity Identifiers (UEI)**. You will need your UEI for Grants.gov.

Preparing to Apply

JustGrants training opportunities:

A set of short videos on the application process is available at:

<https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training>

Application Mechanics: Submitting an Application Training, offered every Wednesday from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. ET

<https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training/weekly-training-webinars>

JIRN Review of Proposal Narratives

- JIRN staff and a group of former SAC Directors can review your proposals in advance
 - Assess adherence to the basic intent of SJS projects
 - Confirm inclusion of required sections of SJS grant proposal
- Narratives must be received by JIRN **no later than 2/17/2026**. They will be reviewed and returned with comments within one week.
- JIRN will not be part of the funding determination. Will share with BJS a list of SACs who participated in this pre-submission review.



SJS Grant and JIRN

In addition to proposal narrative review, JIRN can help by:

- Facilitating collaboration among SACs, setting up meetings and discussions
- Identifying examples of SJS work in the library database
- Some resources are on the JIRN website
- Also, updated OJP application guide
<https://www.ojp.gov/funding/apply/ojp-grant-application-resource-guide>

QUESTIONS: Contact Jason Trask, jtrask@jirn.org.

BJS Program Managers by State

You can find your BJS SJS-SAC
Program Manager on our website at:

<https://jirn.org/bjs-sjs-staff/>

SJS-SAC Program State Assignments

Stephanie Burroughs

Unit Chief

Criminal Justice Data Improvement Programs Unit/Policy Division



Terrance Ealey

Grants Management Specialist

Criminal Justice Data Improvement Programs Unit/
Policy Division



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Grants Management Specialist

Criminal Justice Data Improvement Programs Unit/
Policy Division

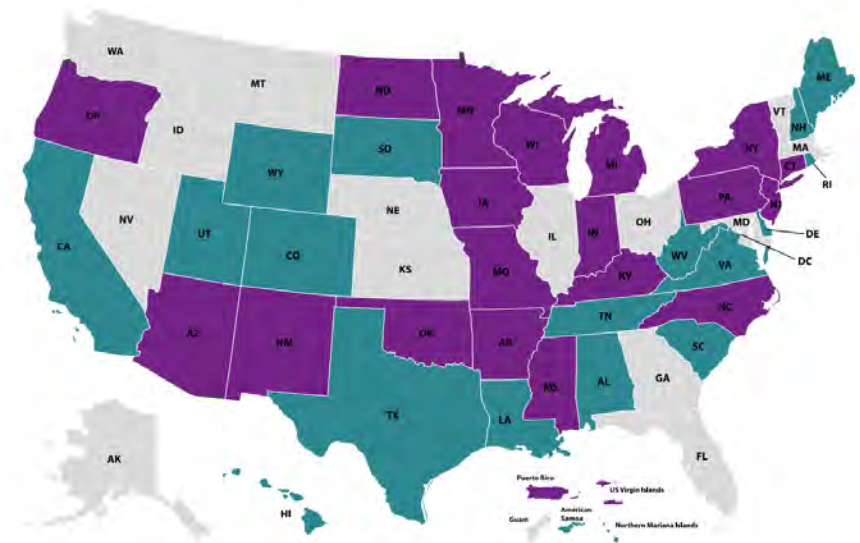


Ronald Planty

Grants Management Specialist

Criminal Justice Data Improvement Programs Unit/
Policy Division

Click on a state to view the SAC contact.





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