

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE (BJA)

# Fiscal Year 2023 Solicitation Webinar:

## BJA's Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner (ME/C) System Program

**March 1, 2023**



**BJA**  
Bureau of Justice Assistance  
U.S. Department of Justice

# Presenters

**Thurston Bryant**

**Senior Policy Advisor - Forensics Unit**

**BJA Policy Office**

**E-mail: [Thurston.Bryant@usdoj.gov](mailto:Thurston.Bryant@usdoj.gov)**

**Patricia Melton, Ph.D.**

**Project Director**

**Forensics Training and Technical Assistance Program**

**RTI International**

**E-mail: [pmelton@rti.org](mailto:pmelton@rti.org)**

# Agenda

- **SECTION 1: BJA and OJP Overview**
- **SECTION 2: BJA's Fiscal Year 2023  
Strengthening the ME/C System Program –  
Solicitation Overview**
- **SECTION 3: How to Apply**
- **SECTION 4: RTI International – New Forensics  
Training and Technical Assistance Program  
Introduction**
- **SECTION 5: Questions and Answers Session**



SECTION 1:

**OJP AND BJA:**

**OVERVIEW  
INFORMATION**



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# What is the Office of Justice Programs?

- The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) provides grant funding, training, research, and statistics to the criminal justice community.
- OJP is one of three grant-making components of the Department of Justice along with the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

## Office of Justice Programs

**BJA** - Bureau of Justice Assistance

**BJS** - Bureau of Justice Statistics

**NIJ** - National Institute of Justice

**OVC** - Office for Victims of Crime

**OJJDP** - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

**SMART** - Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking

# U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance

**Mission:** BJA's mission is to provide leadership and services in grant administration and criminal justice policy development to support state, local, and Tribal justice strategies to achieve safer communities.

BJA works with communities, governments, and nonprofit organizations to reduce crime, recidivism, and unnecessary confinement, and promote a safe and fair criminal justice system.



[www.bja.gov](http://www.bja.gov)





Appointed by President Biden in February 2022, Director Moore leads BJA's programmatic and policy efforts on providing a wide range of resources, including training and technical assistance, to law enforcement, courts, corrections, treatment, reentry, justice information sharing, and community-based partners to address chronic and emerging criminal justice challenges nationwide.

### Policy Office

Provides national leadership to criminal justice organizations that partner with BJA to identify effective program models for replication and infuse data-driven, evidence-based strategies into operational models, practices, and programs.

### Programs Office

Administers state, local, tribal, and territorial grant programs. It acts as BJA's direct line of communication to states, local jurisdictions, territories, and tribal governments by providing customer-focused grants management support and careful stewardship over federal funds.

### Operations Office

Coordinates all communication, formulates and executes the budget, manages contracts, measures grantees' performance, and provides administrative support to BJA.

### Public Safety Officer Benefits Office

Provides death and education benefits to survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other public safety officers, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty.

**BJA Director  
Karhlton F. Moore**

# BJA's Five Major Strategic Focus Areas

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Improve public safety through measures which build trust with the community and ensure an effective criminal justice system

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Reduction in recidivism and prevention of unnecessary confinement and interactions with the criminal justice system

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Integration of evidence-based, research-driven strategies into the day-to-day operations of BJA and the programs BJA administers and supports

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Increasing program effectiveness with a renewed emphasis on data analysis, information sharing, and performance management

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Ensuring organizational excellence through outstanding administration and oversight of all of BJA's strategic investments

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**Fund** – Invest diverse funding streams to accomplish goals.

**Educate** – Research, develop, and deliver what works.

**Equip** – Create tools and products to build capacity and improve outcomes.

**Partner** – Consult, connect, and convene.

SECTION 2:

# STRENGTHENING THE ME/C SYSTEM PROGRAM:

## SOLICITATION OVERVIEW



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# Strengthening the ME/C System Program:

## Solicitation Overview

# Solicitation Posting and Closing Date Information

- **Posting Date:** February 7, 2023
- **Closing Date:** April 18, 2023
- **Grants.gov Deadline:** April 11, 2023, 8:59 pm Eastern
- **Application JustGrants Deadline:** April 18, 2023, 8:59 pm Eastern
- **Weblink:**  
<https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/o-bja-2023-171570>



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# Strengthening the ME/C System Program: Solicitation Overview

## Program Background:

The medicolegal death investigation (MDI) workforce is experiencing a national shortage of practicing, board-certified forensic pathologists. Furthermore, there is variability in the practice of death investigation across the United States, resulting in an inconsistent provision of MDI services.

Created in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, the ME/C Program is a competitive and discretionary grant program designed to help address medical death investigation workforce needs to increase the number of practicing board-certified forensic pathologists, and ME/C offices need to implement and follow quality standards and performance criteria, in an effort, to provide consistent and equitable application of death investigation services.

<https://bja.ojp.gov/program/strengthening-mec/overview>



# FY 2023 ME/C Program Funding

## Approximately \$2,050,000 Available

Category (Purpose Area)	Number of Awards	Dollar Amount for Each Award	Performance Start Date	Performance Duration (Months)
Purpose Area 1:	Up to 7	\$150,000 (1 Fellow)	10/01/2023	36
Forensic Pathology Fellowships		\$300,000 (2 Fellows)		
Purpose Area 2:	Up to 10	\$100,000	10/01/2023	36
Medical Examiner- Coroner Office Accreditation				



**Note:** An applicant entity may submit more than one application, if each application proposes a different project in response to the solicitation. Also, an entity may be proposed as a subrecipient (subgrantee) in more than one application.

# Strengthening the ME/C System Program:

## Solicitation Overview

### Purpose Areas and Goals:

- Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships - Contribute to increasing the number of trained and board-certified forensic pathology practitioners.
- Purpose Area 2: ME/C Office Accreditation - Strengthen the quality and consistency of ME/C services in their respective office, thereby increasing public trust in these services.

### Program Funding and Awards

- To date, 84 awards totaling \$12,400,000 have been made since FY 2017.
- This includes 50 awards made under Purpose Area 1 (Fellowships) and 34 awards made under Purpose Area 2 (Accreditation).



# Strengthening the ME/C System Program: Solicitation Overview

## Eligible Applicants:

- State governments
- Special district governments
- City or township governments
- Public and State controlled institutions of higher education
- County governments
- Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)
- Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)
- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Private institutions of higher education
- For profit organizations other than small businesses



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# Strengthening the ME/C System Program: Solicitation Overview

## Major Changes from Last Year:

- Project Period – Increased from 24 months to 36 months to further assist the field.
- Eligible Applicants – Individuals were removed as eligible applicants. So now only organizations can apply and receive funding under the program.
- Successful Grant Application Examples – From prior years for both Purpose Areas are available online to assist the field. For more information, visit: <https://bj.a.ojp.gov/program/strengthening-mec/funding>



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# Permissible Use of Funds

## Purpose Area 1: Fellowships

- Salaries/Stipends and Fringe Benefits
- Loan Repayments
- Recruitment Travel
- Minor Equipment and Supplies
- Training
- Medical License Reimbursement



# Permissible Use of Funds

## Purpose Area 2: Accreditation

- Equipment and Supplies
- Personnel
- Travel
- Microgrants
- Funds used to support new accreditation and maintain existing accreditation as well.



# Permissible Use of Funds

## Budget Information for BOTH Purpose Areas

- Training – To attend BJA’s forensics grantee workshop.
- No-Cost Extensions
- Certification Fees



# Non-Permissible Use of Funds

**Construction**

**Supplanting**

**Unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), including unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAV), and all accompanying accessories to support UAS or UAV**



**General costs that are not pertinent for meeting the PA 1 Fellows project**

**General costs that are not pertinent for meeting the PA 2 Accreditation project**



SECTION 3:

# STRENGTHENING THE ME/C SYSTEM PROGRAM:

## HOW TO APPLY INFORMATION



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# Agenda

- Application Submission Process
- Application Review Process
- Additional Application Components
- Merit Selection Criteria



## Two-Step Process

- **Step 1:** The applicant must submit by the Grants.gov deadline the required Application for Federal Assistance standard form (SF-424) and a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form when they register in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>
- To register in Grants.gov, the applicant will need to ensure that its System for Award Management (SAM) registration is current.
- **NOTE - Grants.Gov DUE DATE: April 11, 2023; 8:59 pm EDT**

# Application Submission Process



## Two-Step Process

- **Step 2:** The applicant must then submit the **full application** including attachments in JustGrants at [JustGrants.usdoj.gov](https://JustGrants.usdoj.gov). To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline.
- OJP encourages applicants to review, the “How to Apply” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) and the JustGrants website for more information, resources, and training.
- **NOTE - JustGrants DUE DATE: April 18, 2023; 8:59 pm EDT**



# Application Review Process



1. OJP screens applications to ensure they meet the basic minimum requirements prior to conducting the peer review.
2. Applications that meet the basic minimum requirements, will be evaluated for technical merit by a peer review panel(s).

Although specific requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all OJP solicitations:

- The application must be submitted by an **eligible type of applicant**.
- The application must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable).
- The application must be **responsive to the scope** of the solicitation.
- The application must include all items necessary to meet the **basic minimum requirements**.

## Basic Minimum Requirements

The following application elements **must** be included in the application to meet the **basic minimum requirements** to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding:

- **Proposal Abstract**
- **Proposal Narrative**
- **Budget Web-based Form** (The web-based form includes the budget details and the budget narrative.)

# Additional Application Components



- **Accreditation Documentation – For Both Purpose Areas**
- **List of Key Personnel Materials – Organizational chart, Résumés, List of Project Staff**
- **Project Timeline**
- **Letters of Support**
- **Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist (NEPA)**
- **Disclosures and Assurances**
- **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**
- **Disclosure of Duplicate Cost Items**
- **DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirement**

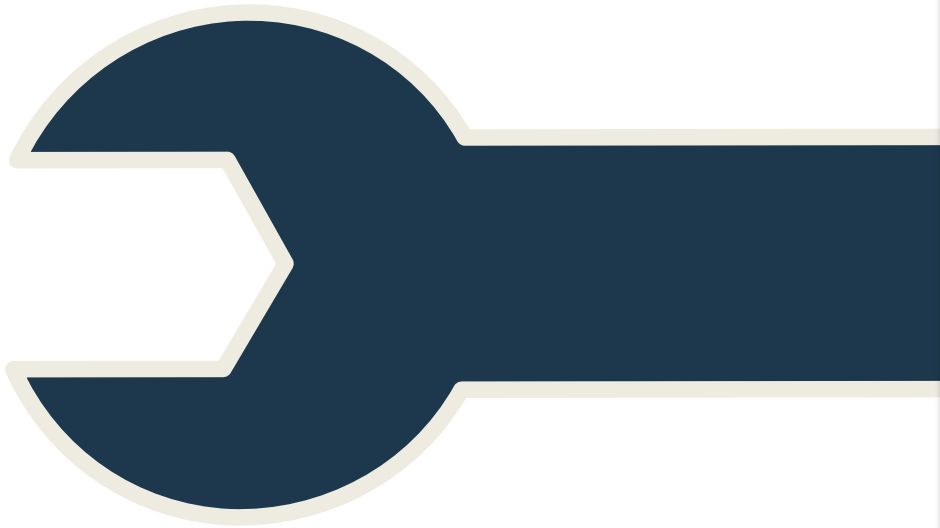


# Merit Review Criteria

- **Statement of the Problem/Description of the Issue (15 Percent)** - Evaluate the applicant's understanding of the program/issue to be addressed.
- **Project Design and Implementation (40 Percent)** - Evaluate the adequacy of the proposal, including the goals, objectives, timelines, milestones, and deliverables.
- **Capabilities and Competencies (30 Percent)** - Evaluate the administrative and technical capacity of the applicant to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives.
- **Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (5 Percent)** - Evaluate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements and the plan for collecting the required data.
- **Budget (10 Percent)** - Evaluate for completeness, cost effectiveness, and allowability (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

**PLEASE REVIEW THE SOLICITATION FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION.**

# JustGrants System



OJP has developed several resources to help grantees navigate the JustGrants system.

We encourage all of our grantees take the time to review and leverage the various resources available to use the system and execute basic functions. These resources include videos, job aides, and more on procedures for entity management, award acceptance, and grant modifications.

**Training Available:**

<https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training-resources/justgrants-training/grants-management-lifecycle>

**Subscribe to the JustGrants Newsletter:**

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

For any questions or technical issues regarding JustGrants please contact the helpdesk at [JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov](mailto:JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov) or 833-872-5175.

# Contact Information For Solicitation Questions

- For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, contact the OJP Response Center at 800-851-3420, 301-240-6310 (TTY for hearing-impaired callers only), or [grants@ncjrs.gov](mailto:grants@ncjrs.gov).
- The OJP Response Center operates from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time (ET) Monday–Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET on the solicitation close date.

SECTION 4:

**MUHR PROGRAM:**

***NEW* - BJA FORENSICS  
TRAINING & TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
INTRODUCTION**

RTI International



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# Forensics Training and Technical Assistance Team (Forensics TTA)



## The Who

- Led by RTI International
- Cadre of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)
- Advisory Board

## The What

- Assisting BJA grantees in accomplishing strategic goals and objectives across forensic disciplines
- Proactively engaging grantees to monitor progress and develop materials based upon agency needs
- Supporting sustainability through implementation of new and enhancement of existing policies/practices

## The How

- National Grantees Meeting
  - On-site and virtual engagements
  - Peer-to-peer connections
  - Online learning (webinars, written briefs, working groups)
  - Social media
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# Coming Soon...

- Follow us on Social Media!
  - *Twitter:* @Forensics\_TTA
  - *Facebook:* Forensics TTA
- Forensics TTA Website
- Webinars
- ...and much more!

**Patricia Melton, Ph.D.**  
Project Director  
[pmelton@rti.org](mailto:pmelton@rti.org)

**Ashley Rodriguez**  
Co-Project Director  
[ashleyrodriguez@rti.org](mailto:ashleyrodriguez@rti.org)

**Chris Williams**  
Operations Director  
[clwilliams@rti.org](mailto:clwilliams@rti.org)

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**Forensics TTA**  
[ForensicsTTA@rti.org](mailto:ForensicsTTA@rti.org)



SECTION 5:

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
PARTICIPATION!**

**QUESTIONS AND  
ANSWERS SESSION**



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