

BJA FY25 DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction (CEBR) – Competitive Grants Program

Anticipated Amount To Be Awarded Under This Funding Opportunity: \$3,000,000

Anticipated Award Ceiling: Up to \$1,000,000

Anticipated Period of Performance Duration: 24 months

Funding Opportunity Number: O-BJA-2025-172441

Deadline to submit SF-424 in Grants.gov: **October 22, 2025, by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time**
Deadline to submit application in JustGrants: **October 29, 2025, by 8:59 p.m. Eastern Time**



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

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BASIC INFORMATION

The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#) (BJA) is accepting applications for funding in response to this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO).

Agency Name	U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Bureau of Justice Assistance
NOFO Title	FY25 DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction (CEBR) - Competitive Grants Program
Announcement Type	Initial
Funding Opportunity Number	O-BJA-2025-172441
Assistance Listing Number	16.036

Executive Summary

This funding opportunity seeks to support states and units of local government with existing crime laboratories that conduct DNA analysis to solve crimes and protect public safety by maximizing the effective utilization of DNA technology to process DNA samples for entry into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS).

This program is for **Competitive** funding only. See [FY 2025 DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction \(CEBR\) – Formula Grants Program](#) for formula funding. Eligible agencies may apply for both Competitive and Formula CEBR Funding.

Please see the [Eligible Applicants](#) section for the eligibility criteria.

- **Category 1: Increasing capacity and/or efficiency to process crime scene samples (Anticipated Award Amount: \$1,000,000)**

Category 1 supports projects that enhance the operational capacity or efficiency of accredited public forensic DNA laboratories to process CODIS-eligible crime scene samples. Funding may support a wide range of strategies tailored to a laboratory's unique needs, including but not limited to personnel, instrumentation, workflow modernization, Laboratory Information Management System improvements, method validation, or training, provided these investments directly reduce casework backlogs, improve turnaround times, and increase the number of eligible profiles uploaded to CODIS.

- **Category 2: Rapid DNA in the booking station (Anticipated Award Amount: \$1,000,000)**

Category 2 supports the implementation or expansion of Rapid DNA technology in booking stations to generate CODIS-eligible DNA profiles from arrestees. Funding may be used for a variety of activities necessary to establish or enhance Rapid DNA workflows, including but not limited to the acquisition, validation, and integration of Rapid

DNA instruments; training of booking personnel; development of secure data systems; or other infrastructure needed to support timely and compliant CODIS submissions.

OJP is committed to advancing work that furthers DOJ's mission to uphold the rule of law, to keep our country safe, and to protect civil rights. OJP provides federal leadership, funding, and other critical resources to directly support law enforcement, combat violent crime, protect American children, provide services to American crime victims, and address public safety challenges, including human trafficking and the opioid crisis.

Key Dates and Times

Funding Opportunity Release Date	September 11, 2025
Pre-Application Webinar	Details about a webinar for this NOFO will be provided at a later date. Please be sure to check BJA's Upcoming Events for further information.
SAM.gov Registration/Renewal	Recommend beginning process by September 22, 2025, and no later than October 8, 2025
Step 1: Grants.gov Application Deadline	11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on October 22, 2025
Step 2: JustGrants Application Deadline	8:59 p.m. Eastern Time on October 29, 2025

Funding Details

Anticipated Amount To Be Awarded Under This Funding Opportunity: \$3,000,000

- **C-BJA-2025-00061-PROD, Category 1: Increasing capacity and/or efficiency to process crime scene samples**
 - **Anticipated Number of Awards:** 2
 - **Anticipated Award Ceiling:** Up to \$1,000,000
 - **Anticipated Period of Performance Start Date:** October 1, 2025
 - **Anticipated Period of Performance Duration:** 24 months
- **C-BJA-2025-00062-PROD, Category 2: Rapid DNA in the booking station**
 - **Anticipated Number of Awards:** 1
 - **Anticipated Award Ceiling:** Up to \$1,000,000
 - **Anticipated Period of Performance Start Date:** October 1, 2025
 - **Anticipated Period of Performance Duration:** 24 months

Note: Applicants may propose a budget that is less than the anticipated award ceiling amount. The budget should be reasonable to conduct the proposed project and be within the applicant's capacity to manage.

Availability of Funds

This funding opportunity, and awards under this funding opportunity, are subject to the availability of funding and any changes or additional requirements that may be imposed by the agency or by law. In addition, nothing in this NOFO is intended to, nor does it, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States or its departments, agencies, entities, officers, employees, agents, or any other person.

Statutory Authority

Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2025 (Pub. L. No. 119-4, Div. A, Secs. 1101(a)(2) and 1301(4), 139 Stat. 9, 10-11, 17; see Pub. L. No. 118-42, 138 Stat. 25, 147, para. 10(A)).

Agency Contact Information

For assistance with the requirements of this funding opportunity:

OJP Response Center

Phone: 800-851-3420 or 202-353-5556 (TTY for hearing-impaired callers only)

Email: OJP.ResponseCenter@usdoj.gov

Hours of operation: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) Monday–Friday

For assistance with **SAM.gov** (registration/renewal):

SAM.gov Help Desk

Phone: 866-606-8220

Web: [SAM.gov Help Desk \(Federal Service Desk\)](#)

Hours of operation: 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET Monday–Friday

For assistance with **Grants.gov** (registration, submission of the Application for Federal Assistance SF-424):

Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline

Phone: 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035

Email: support@grants.gov

Web: [Grants.gov Customer Support](#)

Hours of operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays

For assistance with **JustGrants** (registration, submission of full application):

JustGrants Service Desk

Phone: 833-872-5175

Email: JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov

Hours of operation: 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET Monday–Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET on Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays.

For procedures related to unforeseen technical issues beyond the control of the applicant that impact submission by the deadlines, see [Experiencing Technical Issues Preventing Submission of an Application \(Technical Waivers\)](#).

Resources for Applying

Pre-Application Webinar: Details about a webinar for this NOFO will be provided at a later date. Please be sure to check BJA's [Upcoming Events](#) for further information.

[OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#): Referred to as the “Application Resource Guide” throughout the NOFO, this resource provides guidance to help applicants for OJP funding prepare and submit their applications.

[JustGrants Application Submission Training Webpage](#): Offers helpful information and resources on the grant application process.

Note: If this NOFO requires something different from any guidance provided in the [Application Resource Guide](#), the difference will be noted in this NOFO and the applicant should follow the guidance in this NOFO.



ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

The types of entities that are eligible to apply for this funding opportunity are listed below:

- **Government Entities**
 - State governments
 - County governments
 - City or township governments
 - Special district governments
- **Educational Organizations**
 - Public and state-controlled institutions of higher education
- **Other**
 - Units of local government

State Government Entities: For the purposes of this NOFO, “state” means any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Other Units of Local Government: For the purposes of this NOFO, other units of local government include towns, boroughs, parishes, villages, or other general purpose political subdivisions of a state.

Additional Applicant Eligibility Factors

In order to qualify for funding, an applicant for funds must submit the signed and completed [DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction \(CEBR\) Program Eligibility Certification](#) form.

A state or unit of local government (or any department, agency, or instrumentality of the foregoing) that does not own, control, or operate a crime laboratory or laboratory system is not an eligible applicant under this program. For example, a state or unit of local government that receives forensic services only by way of an inter- or intra- governmental arrangement or contract, but does not own, control, or operate its own crime laboratory within its jurisdiction, is not eligible under this program.

Limit on Number of Applications

An applicant may submit more than one application if each application proposes a different project in response to the NOFO. Also, an entity may be proposed as a subrecipient in more than one application.

Applications under which two or more entities (project partners) would carry out the federal award will be considered. However, only one entity may be the applicant for the NOFO; any others must be proposed as subrecipients. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on subawards.

Cost Sharing/Match Requirement

This NOFO does **not** require cost sharing/match.



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

General Purpose of the Funding

The purpose of the CEBR Competitive Program is to maximize the effective utilization of DNA technology to strengthen evidence-based criminal justice responses. The priorities of the CEBR Competitive Program are (1) increasing the capacity and/or efficiency of publicly funded forensic DNA laboratories to conduct analysis of crime scene samples for entry into CODIS and (2) implementing Rapid DNA in the booking station(s) in eligible jurisdictions. The program is specifically for eligible entities seeking to enact meaningful change to improve long-term capacity to process CODIS-eligible samples.

With increases in capacity to process more DNA samples for entry into CODIS, CEBR-funded laboratories are able to help law enforcement reduce violent crime, support prosecutors in their efforts to meet their mission, and create safer communities. The program is designed to fairly and efficiently prioritize jurisdictions facing challenges in addressing backlogs by considering key performance measures reported by publicly funded forensic DNA laboratories.

Applicants should refer to [Application Contents, Submission Requirements, and Deadlines: Budget Detail Form](#) for information on allowable and unallowable costs that may inform the development of their project design.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this NOFO, the following are defined:

- **Backlogged forensic biology/DNA case:** A forensic biology/DNA case that has not been completed within 30 days of receipt in the laboratory.
- **Backlogged DNA database sample:** A DNA database sample that has not been uploaded to CODIS within 30 days of receipt in the laboratory.
- **Case:** An analysis request for examination in one forensic investigation area (forensic biology/DNA for this purpose).
- **CODIS:** CODIS is the acronym for the Combined DNA Index System and is the generic term used to describe the FBI's program of support for criminal justice DNA databases, as well as the software used to run these databases.
- **CODIS hit:** Refers to an association between DNA profiles in CODIS. CODIS hits are tracked as either an offender hit (where the identity of a potential suspect is generated) or as a forensic hit (where the DNA profiles obtained from two or more crime scenes are linked but the source of these profiles remains unknown).
- **DNA analysis/analyses:** Activities conducted to facilitate processing and entry of forensic DNA samples into CODIS once the sample has been collected from a crime scene or a known individual; this may include screening (the location, assessment, identification, and characterization of body fluid(s) and other biological areas of interest), laboratory processing (e.g., extraction, quantitation, amplification), and/or issuing reports (e.g., fragment/sequence analysis, DNA profile evaluation and comparison, report writing and associated technical/administrative reviews of DNA reports).
- **Forensic Genetic Genealogy:** The combination of genetic analysis with traditional historical and genealogical research to study family history. For forensic investigations, it

can be used to identify remains by tying the DNA to a family with a missing person or to point to the likely identity of a perpetrator. *SEE NOTICE BELOW.*

- **Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS):** A software-based system that collects, creates, and stores all data related to forensic examinations in a crime laboratory. Key features include, but are not limited to, workflow and data tracking support, flexible architecture, and data exchange interfaces.
- **LIMS module:** A sample/case tracking component separate from the laboratory's LIMS that functions only for the purposes of the forensic biology/DNA unit. NOTE: The module may be a product of the same vendor as the laboratory's current LIMS or a different one.
- **National DNA Index System (NDIS):** One component of CODIS, containing the DNA profiles contributed by federal, state, and local participating forensic laboratories. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, the federal government, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory, and Puerto Rico participate in NDIS.
- **Number of CEBR-funded DNA profiles from forensic analyses entered into CODIS for the DNA laboratory:** CEBR grant attribution that contributes to the uploading of a DNA profile to CODIS as a result of CEBR-funded overtime, CEBR-funded personnel, CEBR-funded analysis supplies, and/or CEBR-funded outsourcing.
- **Number of CEBR-funded forensic biology/DNA cases completed by the laboratory:** CEBR grant attribution that contributes to the testing of a case as a result of CEBR-funded overtime, CEBR-funded personnel, CEBR-funded analysis supplies, and/or CEBR-funded outsourcing.
- **Number of forensic biology/DNA cases submitted to the laboratory:** The number of forensic biology/DNA analysis requests submitted by agencies for testing in the laboratory.
- **Rapid DNA; Rapid DNA Analysis:** Describes the fully automated (hands-free) process of developing a CODIS STR profile from a reference sample buccal swab. The "swab in, profile out" process consists of automated extraction, amplification, separation, detection, and allele calling without human intervention. See [Rapid DNA-FBI](#) and [Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories](#).
- **Rapid DNA in the Booking Station:** The use of Rapid DNA on buccal (inner cheek) swabs collected from certain arrested individuals that are legally required to provide such samples at the time of arrest for the purposes of entering and searching the resulting DNA profiles in CODIS. A state seeking to use funding for Booking Station Rapid DNA must adhere to the [Standards for the Operation of Rapid DNA Booking Systems by Law Enforcement Booking Agencies](#) and the [National Rapid DNA Booking Operational Procedures Manual](#).
- **Rapid DNA Testing of Crime Scene Samples:** The use of Rapid DNA technology on forensic DNA samples obtained from a crime scene. Rapid DNA on crime scene samples is not fully automated and requires interpretation and review by a qualified DNA analyst. Rapid DNA testing of forensic samples will not be approved by NDIS until sometime in 2025. *SEE NOTICE BELOW ON RAPID DNA TESTING OF CRIME SCENE SAMPLES.*
- **Ratio of backlog/cases completed per month:** This ratio is one method that can be used to normalize backlogs across laboratories of various sizes. It is calculated by taking the backlog of the laboratory and dividing it by the average number of cases the laboratory completes within a month.

- **Sexual assault kit (SAK):** A set of items used by medical personnel for the preservation of physical evidence collected from a person, living or deceased, following an allegation or suspicion of sexual assault.
- **Total number of CODIS hits from forensic analyses for the DNA laboratory:** The total amount of CODIS hits generated by the laboratory regardless of CEBR, local, or other agency funds.
- **Total number of DNA profiles from forensic analyses entered into CODIS for the DNA laboratory:** Laboratory attribution that contributes to the uploading of a DNA profile to CODIS regardless of CEBR, local, or other agency funds.
- **Total number of forensic DNA samples completed by the laboratory:** Total number of forensic DNA samples tested to completion by the laboratory regardless of CEBR, local, or other agency funds.
- **Total number of forensic biology/DNA cases completed by the laboratory:** Laboratory resource attribution that contributes to the testing of a case to completion regardless of CEBR, local, or other agency funds.
- **Turnaround time:** The average number of days from the date a laboratory receives a case to the date that the laboratory issues a final report for the case.

NOTICE ON FORENSIC GENETIC GENEALOGICAL (FGG) DNA ANALYSIS AND

SEARCHING: There have been important non-CODIS advances in DNA technology for the criminal justice field; however, because the purpose of the DNA CEBR Program is to process samples for CODIS and to increase the capacity of labs to process samples for CODIS, FGG DNA analysis expenses are not allowable under the DNA CEBR Program at this time.

NOTICE ON RAPID DNA TESTING OF CRIME SCENE SAMPLES: The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has approved 2025 Quality Assurance Standards (QAS) expanding the use of Rapid DNA Analysis. In recognition that the effective date of the 2025 QAS (July 1, 2025) pre-dates the execution of any FY25 funding, relevant proposal narratives will be accepted involving the use of Rapid DNA technology on samples collected from crime scenes for upload to NDIS in accordance with the QAS and NDIS procedures.

Agency Funding Priorities

In order to advance public safety and help meet its mission, OJP will provide priority consideration to applicants that propose (as applicable within the scope of this funding opportunity) projects designed to advance the goals listed below. Applicants seeking priority consideration should specify in the proposal narrative (and in the budget detail form, as applicable) which of the following goal(s) the project is intended to advance and how it will do so:

- (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.

Priority consideration will also be given to applicants falling into the highest percentiles of performance measures (e.g., longest turnaround times) reported by CEBR laboratories in the preceding year. This data is posted on the BJA website at: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/dna-cebr/performance-measures>.

- Baseline Measures - Casework Laboratories
 - Total number of forensic biology/DNA cases completed in 2024.
 - Number of untested/not completed forensic biology/DNA cases more than 30 days old (backlogged) on December 31, 2024.
 - The average number of days needed to complete (including peer review and report) forensic DNA cases for calendar year 2024.

Note: Addressing these priority areas is one of many factors that OJP considers in making funding decisions. Receiving priority consideration for one or more priority areas does not guarantee a funding award.

Unallowable Uses of Funds

The following are certain unallowable costs and certain activities that are out of the program scope and will not be funded.

1. Out of program scope is any program or activity, at any tier that, directly or indirectly, violates (or promotes or facilitates the violation of) federal immigration law (including 8 U.S.C. § 1373) or impedes or hinders the enforcement of federal immigration law—including by failing to comply with 8 U.S.C. § 1373, give access to DHS agents, or honor DHS requests and provide requested notice to DHS agents.
2. Out of program scope is any program or activity, at any tier that violates any applicable Federal civil rights or nondiscrimination law. This includes violations that— (1) indirectly violate the law, including by promoting or facilitating violations; or (2) unlawfully favor individuals in any race or protected group, including on a majority or minority, or privileged or unprivileged, basis, within a given area, population, or sector.
3. As specified in the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#), in Chapter 3.13 “Unallowable Costs” (“Legal Services for Aliens”), any obligations of funds, at any tier, under this award to provide (or to support the provision of) legal services to any removable alien or any alien otherwise unlawfully present in the United States shall be unallowable costs for purposes any award made under this notice, but the foregoing shall not be understood to apply— (1) to legal services to obtain protection orders for victims of crime; or (2) to immigration-related legal services that may be expressly authorized or required by any law, or any judicial ruling, governing or applicable to the award.

Program Goals and Objectives

The overarching goal of BJA's FY25 CEBR Competitive Program is to maximize the effective utilization of DNA technology to solve crimes and protect public safety by states and units of local government with eligible crime laboratories or laboratory systems. By enabling labs to enter more samples into CODIS, this program accelerates case resolution, prevents repeat victimization, and safeguards communities.

Goal 1: Implement DNA technology in forensic laboratories to increase the number of CODIS-eligible crime scene samples processed.

Objective 1: Increase the capacity of laboratories to process CODIS-eligible crime scene samples in accredited, publicly funded forensic DNA laboratories through the use of DNA technology.

Objective 2: Increase the efficiency of laboratories to process CODIS-eligible crime scene samples in accredited, publicly funded forensic DNA laboratories through the use of DNA technology.

Goal 2: Implement Rapid DNA at the booking station.

Objective 1: Increase the number of qualifying arrestee DNA samples uploaded to CODIS in the booking environment.

Objective 2: Reduce the time between DNA collection and disposition of arrestee-related CODIS hits.

How Awards Will Contribute to Program Goals/Objectives

As technology advances to improve the analysis of DNA evidence, there is a respective increase in demand for DNA testing. Furthermore, as the technology becomes more complex and costly, laboratory budgets struggle to meet the increased demand as identified in [DOJ's 2019 Needs Assessment of Forensic Laboratories and Medical Examiner-Coroner Offices](#). Delays in testing evidence result in delays in justice for victims and lead to additional victimization by serial offenders.

Awardees will use CEBR Competitive funding to bridge this resource gap by enacting meaningful, long-term improvements for processing CODIS-eligible samples. The funds are to be used to increase their capacity to process samples for CODIS entry through the adoption of new and/or emerging technology. By continuing to populate the CODIS database, grantees increase the number of CODIS hits generated each year. These hits provide investigating agencies, such as law enforcement, with information in cases where crime scene evidence has yielded a DNA profile, but no suspect has been identified. Award funds from this program are critical to help ensure the availability of objective evidence (DNA reports) to the investigative agencies in a timely manner.

Objectives can be achieved by implementing allowable long-term efficiency or capacity enhancement activities. Allowable activities include, but are not limited to:

- Purchasing/implementing new and more efficient instruments/robotics to automate routine laboratory processing steps.
- Evaluating, validating, and implementing improved workflows for efficient laboratory processing or improved testing results (e.g., enhanced techniques to recover higher quantities of DNA).
- Purchasing and upgrading software (e.g., LIMS) to more efficiently manage laboratory operations.

Expected Outcomes: Deliverables and Performance Measures

To achieve the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity, OJP has identified expected deliverables that must be produced by a recipient. OJP has also identified performance measures (pieces of data) that will indicate how a recipient is achieving the performance goals

and objectives previously identified. Recipients will need to collect and report this performance measure data to OJP.

OJP will measure success by reviewing a recipient's submission of performance reports and data and the extent to which project implementation reflects progress toward the goals and objectives of this NOFO.

Deliverables

Recipients under this funding opportunity do not need to submit any deliverables other than the standard [Post-Award Requirements and Administration](#).

Performance Measures

OJP will require each award recipient to submit regular performance reports that communicate progress toward achieving the goals and objectives identified in [Program Goals and Objectives](#). Applicants can visit [OJP's performance measurement page](#) at ojp.gov/performance for more information on performance measurement activities.

A list of performance measure questions for this funding opportunity can be found in the [CEBR Competitive Performance Measures Questionnaire](#).

Funding Instrument

OJP expects to make awards under this funding opportunity as grants. See the “[Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements](#)” section of the [Application Resource Guide](#) for a brief discussion of important statutes, regulations, and award conditions.



APPLICATION CONTENTS, SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS, AND DEADLINES

This NOFO contains all the information needed to apply for this funding opportunity. The application for this funding opportunity is submitted through web-based forms and attachments in Grants.gov and JustGrants through the steps that follow.

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and SAM.gov Registration

To submit an application, an applicant must have an active registration in the [System for Award Management \(SAM.gov\)](#). SAM.gov assigns entities a unique entity identifier (UEI) that is required for the entity to apply for federal funding. Applicants will enter their UEI with their application. Award recipients must then maintain an active UEI for the duration of their award's period of performance.

First-time Registration: Entities registering in SAM.gov for the first time will submit information about their entity type and structure, financial information (such as dates of the fiscal year, banking information, and executive compensation), entity points of contact, and other information. The information is reviewed and verified by SAM.gov, and then a UEI is issued. This process may take several weeks, so entities considering applying for funding should begin the registration process as soon as possible.

Renewing an Existing Registration: Entities must renew their SAM.gov registration every 12 months to keep it active. If an entity does not renew their SAM.gov registration, it will expire. An expired registration can delay or prevent the submission of an application for funding in Grants.gov and JustGrants.

Applicants are encouraged to start the SAM.gov registration or renewal process **at least 30 days prior to the application's Grants.gov deadline**. Applicants who fail to begin the registration or renewal process at least 10 business days prior to the Grants.gov deadline may not be able to complete the process in time and will not be considered for a technical waiver that allows for late submission.

Submission Instructions: Summary

Applications must be submitted to DOJ electronically through a two-step process that begins in Grants.gov and is completed in JustGrants. See [Basic Information: Key Dates and Times](#) for the Grants.gov and JustGrants application deadlines.

- **Step 1:** The applicant must submit the required [Application for Federal Assistance SF-424](#) by the Grants.gov deadline.
- **Step 2:** The applicant must submit the full application, including attachments, through JustGrants by the deadline (see [JusticeGrants.usdoj.gov](#)).

Submission Step 1: Grants.gov Submission of SF-424

Access/Registration

If the applicant does not already have a Grants.gov account, they will need to register for this opportunity in Grants.gov. Applicants should follow the Grants.gov [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#) to register, create a workspace, assign roles, submit an application, and troubleshoot issues.

Submission of the SF-424

Applicants will begin the application process in Grants.gov with the submission of the SF-424, which collects the applicant's name, address, and UEI; the funding opportunity number; and proposed project title, among other information. The SF-424 must be signed by the Grants.gov Authorized Organizational Representative for the applicant.

See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on completing the SF-424.

Section 8F – Applicant Point of Contact: Please include the name and contact information of the individual **who will complete the application in JustGrants**. JustGrants will use this information (*i.e.*, email address) to assign the application to this user in JustGrants.

Section 19 – Intergovernmental Review: This funding opportunity is not subject to [Executive Order \(E.O.\) 12372](#) (Intergovernmental Review). Applicants should answer section 19 by selecting, "Program is not covered by E.O. 12372."

An applicant should submit the SF-424 as early as possible and recommended not later than 48 hours before the Grants.gov deadline. If an applicant fails to submit the SF-424 in Grants.gov by the deadline, they will be unable to submit their application in JustGrants.

Once the first part of the application has been successfully submitted in Grants.gov, the Grants.gov Workspace status will change from "In Progress" to "Submitted." Applicants will also receive a series of four Grants.gov email notifications. Refer to the [DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#) for additional details.

If an applicant needs to update information in the SF-424 after it is submitted in Grants.gov, they can update the information as part of their JustGrants submission (see [Application Contents, Submission Requirements, and Deadlines: Standard Applicant Information](#)). They do not need to submit an update in Grants.gov.

Submission Step 2: JustGrants Submission of Full Application Access/Registration

For first-time JustGrants applicants, once the application is received from Grants.gov, DOJ will send an email (from DIAMD-NoReply@usdoj.gov) to the email address listed in Section 8F of the SF-424 with instructions on how to create a JustGrants account. This email should arrive within 24 hours after confirmation from Grants.gov of the SF-424 submission.

Creating and setting up a JustGrants account consists of three steps:

1. Follow the instructions in the email to first confirm who will be the Entity Administrator (the person who manages which staff can access JustGrants on behalf of the applicant).
2. Log in to JustGrants and confirm the information in the Entity Profile.
3. Invite other individuals who will serve as the Application Submitter and the Authorized Representative for the applicant to register for JustGrants.

These steps should be completed in JustGrants as early as possible and recommended not later than 48 hours before the JustGrants deadline. Once registered in JustGrants, the Application Submitter will receive a link in an email to complete the rest of the application in JustGrants. Applicants can find additional information on JustGrants registration in the [DOJ Grant Application Submission Checklist](#).

Preparing for Submission

Some of the required sections of the application will be entered directly into JustGrants, and other sections will require documents to be uploaded and attached. Therefore, applicants should allow enough time before the JustGrants deadline to prepare, enter, and upload all the requirements of the application.

Applicants may save their application in the system and add to or change the application as needed prior to hitting the “Submit” button at the end of the application in JustGrants. After the application deadline, no changes or additions can be made to the application. **OJP recommends that applicants submit the complete application package in JustGrants at least 48 hours prior to the JustGrants deadline.**

For additional information, including file name and type requirements, see the “How To Apply” section in the [Application Resource Guide](#) and the [Application Attachment Tips](#) resource.

Standard Applicant Information

The Standard Applicant Information section of the JustGrants application is pre-populated with the SF-424 data submitted in Grants.gov. The applicant will need to review the Standard Applicant Information in JustGrants and can make whatever edits are needed. Within this section, the applicant will need to add ZIP codes for areas affected by the project; confirm their Authorized Representative; and confirm the organization’s unique entity identifier, legal name, and address.

Proposal Abstract

A proposal abstract (no more than 2,000 characters) summarizing the proposed project must be completed in the JustGrants web-based form. The text from abstracts will be made publicly available on the OJP.gov and USASpending.gov websites if the project is awarded, so this section of the application should not contain any personally identifiable information (e.g., the name of the project director).

The abstract should be in paragraph form without bullets or tables and written in the third person (e.g., they, the community, their, themselves, rather than I or we). The abstract should include the following information:

- The name of the applicant’s proposed project.
- The purpose of the proposed project (*i.e.*, what the project will do and why it is necessary).
- Where the project will take place (*i.e.*, the service area, if applicable).
- Who will be served by the project (*i.e.*, who will be helped or have their needs addressed by the project).
- What activities will be carried out to complete the project.
- The subrecipient(s)/partner organizations or entities, if known.
- Deliverables and expected outcomes (*i.e.*, what the project will achieve).

See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for an [example](#) of a proposal abstract.

Data Requested With Application

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (including Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status)

The Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire helps OJP assess what financial management and internal control systems the applicant has in place, whether these systems would be sufficient to maintain a funding award, and the associated potential risks of an applicant as part of the pre-award risk assessment process. Every OJP applicant (other than an individual applying in their personal capacity, not representing an applicant organization) is required to complete the web-based form in JustGrants. See the [Application Resource Guide: Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire \(including Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status\)](#) for additional guidance on how to complete the questionnaire.

Agency Funding Priorities Inventory

Applicants should complete the Agency Funding Priorities Inventory to indicate whether they are seeking priority consideration based on any of the items listed in the [Agency Funding Priorities](#) section, and if so, which priority(ies) their project will address.

Proposal Narrative

Format of the Proposal Narrative: The Proposal Narrative will be submitted as an attachment in JustGrants. The attached document should be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point size font; have no less than 1-inch margins; have numbered pages; and should not exceed 10 pages. If the Proposal Narrative does not comply with these restrictions, OJP may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions. Tables, charts, references and other relevant materials may be submitted as an appendix to the proposal narrative if needed and will not count toward the page limit.

Sections of the Proposal Narrative: The Proposal Narrative must include the five sections listed below. If the applicant seeks priority consideration, the Proposal Narrative must state which priority goal(s) the applicant's project will advance and describe how (see section Agency Funding Priorities under Program Description).

1. Description of the Need: What critical issue or problem is the applicant proposing to address with this project? Please include:

- A brief explanation of the need, gap, or issue to be addressed by the proposed project.
- Supporting information, data, or evidence to demonstrate the need's existence, size, and impact on the target population and community.
- How the need relates to the purpose of the NOFO.

Category 1

- Applicants should address how the turnaround time and/or ratio of backlog/cases completed per month are negatively impacted by a lack of DNA technology used by the laboratory.
- Applicants must submit baseline measures (see below) to demonstrate the laboratory's need for additional laboratory funding to improve these measures. Applicants are to discuss how the proposed DNA technology will positively impact these baseline measures. **Priority consideration will be given to applicants falling into the highest percentiles of performance measures (e.g., longest turnaround times) reported by CEBR laboratories in the preceding year. This data is posted on the BJA website at: <https://bjaojp.gov/funding/performance-measures/cebr-measures.pdf>.**

- Baseline Measures - Casework Laboratories
- Total number of forensic biology/DNA cases completed in 2024.
- Number of untested/not completed forensic biology/DNA cases more than 30 days old (backlogged) on December 31, 2024.
- The average number of days needed to complete (including peer review and report) forensic DNA cases for calendar year 2024.

Category 2

- Applicants should discuss gaps that exist in the current overarching system regarding CODIS testing of individuals arrested for qualifying offenses.
- Applicants must outline relevant state legislation permitting DNA collection from individuals arrested for qualified offenses.

2. Project Goals and Objectives: How will the proposed project address the need identified and address the purpose of the NOFO? Please include:

- Project goals (goals are broad, visionary statements on what the applicant hopes to accomplish).
- Project objectives (objectives are specific outcomes the applicant plans to achieve through project activities).
- How the applicant's goals and objectives relate to the goals and objectives of the NOFO.

Category 1

- The applicant shall describe the direct correlation between implementation of the proposed DNA technology to an improvement in laboratory turnaround time and/or ratio of backlog/cases completed per month. Although it is not unexpected to see a temporary decrease in these two measures of performance during the time directly surrounding implementation of the new DNA technology, the applicant should produce a timeline for the expected realization of gains from the proposed project.

Applicants must describe how funding supplied through the CEBR Formula Program is insufficient to complete the project proposed.

Category 2

- The applicant shall describe the direct correlation between the implementation of Rapid DNA in the Booking Station and improvement in criminal justice outcomes. The applicant must discuss the DNA Index of Special Concern (DISC) and provide an estimate of how many DISC profiles are enabled in their jurisdiction.

3. Project Design and Implementation: How will the applicant implement project activities that meet the goals and objectives? Please include:

- What activities the applicant will conduct to achieve the proposed goals and objectives.
- How the applicant will deliver or complete those activities.
- When the activities will take place.
- Who in the applicant's organization will staff the activities, including key staff.

Categories 1 and 2

- In addition to responses to the bullets above, applicants should include a strategy and plan for project implementation must be included. This plan should include a detailed timeline for the project (e.g., for the procurement, validation, and implementation of any new equipment; for the implementation of new procedures; for when personnel expenses [hiring and/or overtime] will start to accrue; and for the execution of contracts) to be completed within the project period. A mitigation plan should be included to outline how the project will still be successful within the period of performance in the face of any hurdles that may be encountered (e.g., changes in staffing, legislative changes, increases in case submissions).

A sustainability plan should be included that demonstrates the applicant's ability and awareness of how to sustain the proposed project after the completion of the project period. A non-exhaustive list of examples may include a plan for annual maintenance following the purchase of new instrumentation, validation of the newly purchased instrumentation, and implementation of processes/procedures.

Category 2

- The applicant must also demonstrate a clear understanding of the IT infrastructure, connectivity, and coordination of numerous agencies that are needed for successful implementation and completion of the project.
- The applicant must demonstrate awareness of the [FBI's National Rapid DNA Booking Operational Procedures Manual](#).
- Applicants are encouraged to review and demonstrate awareness of the FBI's [Guide to All Things Rapid DNA](#), and the [Standards for the Operation of Rapid DNA Booking Systems by Law Enforcement Booking Agencies](#).

4. Capabilities and Competencies: What administrative and technical capacity and expertise does the applicant bring to successfully complete this project? Please include:

- A short description of the applicant's capacity to deliver the proposed project and meet the requirements of the award.
- A description of projects or activities the applicant organization has conducted, or is currently conducting, that demonstrate the applicant's ability to undertake the proposed project activities.
- A summary of relevant experience of team members with key responsibilities for implementing the project.

Category 2

- In addition to responses to the bullets above, if the applicant is not the entity that will operate the Rapid DNA instrument, the applicant should indicate in the proposal narrative the name of the entity it will partner with to do so and a summary of that entity's capacity. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Letter of Support from the agency that will operate the instrument must be provided. See the Memorandum of Understanding section of this NOFO for details.

5. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for This NOFO's Performance Measures

- The applicant should describe how the performance measures data will be derived, state who will be responsible for collecting the data, and affirm that the data will be available for review for 3 years from the date of submission of the final federal financial report (SF-425) under the award, or as otherwise required by law. See 2 C.F.R. 200.333. The data collection plan should be rigorous to ensure that the performance measures data provided are accurate, auditable, and correctly measure the impact the federal funds provided.
- The data collection plan should clearly describe the method(s) for the collection, tracking, and reporting data produced as a result of federal assistance provided under this NOFO.
- The applicant should also provide its policy regarding who is responsible for the process of collecting and calculating the data, who is responsible for quality control of the data, and how the data will be stored.
- The applicant shall demonstrate an understanding of the [CEBR Competitive Performance Measures](#), the specific section(s) that are relevant to the proposed project.

Project Evaluations: An applicant that proposes to use award funds to conduct project evaluations must follow the guidance in the “[Note on Project Evaluations](#)” section in the [Application Resource Guide](#).

Budget and Associated Documentation: Budget Detail Form

The applicant will complete the JustGrants budget detail form. The form collects the individual costs under each cost category needed to implement the proposed project. Applicants should ensure that the name/description of each cost is clear and provide the detailed calculation (e.g., cost per unit and number of units) for the total cost. Applicants should enter additional narrative, as needed, to fully describe the cost calculations and connection to the project goals and objectives (including, if applicable, describing connections to OJP priority goals).

Budget proposals should include the funding needed to implement the proposed activities. In preparing their budget proposals, applicants should consider what types of costs are allowable, if awarded funding. Costs are allowable when they are reasonable, allocable to, and necessary for the performance of the project funded under the federal award and when they comply with the funding statute and agency requirements, including the conditions of the award and the cost principles set out in [2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E](#) and the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#).

Permissible Uses of Funds for Forensic DNA Laboratories

- **Salary and benefits for laboratory employees:** Funds may be used to hire **additional** full-time or part-time laboratory employees to support activities that maximize the effective utilization of DNA technology to solve crime and protect public safety.
- **Overtime for laboratory staff:** Funds may be used to pay overtime for laboratory employees (excluding executive personnel) to support activities that maximize the effective utilization of DNA technology to solve crime and protect public safety. Any

payments for overtime must be in accordance with the applicable provisions of the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#).

- **Training (limited):** Funds may be used to train forensic DNA laboratory personnel on topics directly related to activities proposed to maximize the effective utilization of DNA technology to solve crime and protect public safety. See “**Expenses That Are Not Permitted**,” below, for specific training that is excluded from the FY 2025 program.
- **Travel (limited):** Funds may also be used for travel associated with DNA training, as described in “Training” above. See “**Expenses That Are Not Permitted**” below for specific travel that is excluded from the FY 2025 program.

Travel expenses must be reasonable and comply with the applicable provisions of the grant award terms and award conditions, the DOJ Grants Financial Guide, the recipient’s (and any subrecipient’s) written policies, and DOJ regulations (Part 200 Uniform Requirements). Justification for the number of staff traveling and the benefit of their attendance at the annual event must be included as well as justification as to why other forms of travel/training (e.g., webinars or review of journal articles) are not sufficient.

- **Equipment:** In general, funds may be used to upgrade or purchase laboratory equipment, instrumentation, and associated computer hardware for the forensic DNA laboratory or Rapid DNA in the Booking Station that maximizes the effective utilization of DNA technology to solve crime and protect public safety. See “**Expenses That Are Not Permitted**” below for specific equipment items that are excluded from the FY 2025 program.
- **Supplies:** Justification for supplies must support activities that maximize the effective utilization of DNA technology to solve crime and protect public safety.
- **Contracts**
 - **Contracts for process mapping or other efficiency studies**
Contracts may be established for an outside vendor to conduct a process mapping or efficiency-type study, such as a Lean Six Sigma-type efficiency study of the DNA laboratory. One of the potential benefits from such an approach is highlighted in the report, [Increasing Efficiency of Forensic DNA Casework Using Lean Six Sigma Tools](#).
 - **Warranty, service, or maintenance contracts for equipment**
Contracts may be established to provide warranty, service, or maintenance contracts for laboratory equipment purchased as part of the project proposal.
 - **Contracts for temporary laboratory employees**
Contracts may be established to hire personnel to support activities that maximize the effective utilization of DNA technology to solve crime and protect public safety such as validation or performance check activities.
 - **Contracts for validation studies for new DNA analysis technologies**
Contracts may be established for an outside vendor to validate new instruments, processes, procedures, or chemistries that are NDIS approved within the DNA laboratory.

- **Contracts for in-house training services**
Contracts may be established for an outside vendor to provide in-house training that is directly related to activities that maximize the effective utilization of DNA technology to solve crime and protect public safety. See “Training” for more information about allowable training expenses.
- **Direct administrative expenses:** Up to 3 percent of the federal portion of an award under this program may be used for direct administrative expenses specifically related to grant administration and management, including travel and training costs related to federal grant management.
- **Software:** Allowable software which is associated with running the DNA laboratory and/or Rapid DNA in the Booking Station and will maximize the effective utilization of DNA technology to solve crime and protect public safety may be purchased. Allowable purchases may include, but are not limited to, software and licenses associated with running DNA instrumentation, implementing Rapid DNA in the Booking Station, software associated with running temperature monitoring systems and other quality control systems, and software for DNA mixture interpretation.
- **Criminal History and Booking Software for Booking Station Rapid DNA:**
Upgrades to criminal history and booking software to meet the specifications outlined in the FBI’s [CODIS Arrestee Enrollment Format](#) and [CODIS Rapid Import Format](#) specification documents, as well as to meet the requirements outlined in the [Standards for the Operation of Rapid DNA Booking Systems by Law Enforcement Booking Agencies](#) and the [National Rapid DNA Booking Operational Procedures Manual](#) are allowed.
- **Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)**
 - **New LIMS to upgrade or replace existing systems**
Contracts may be established to purchase and install a new LIMS to upgrade or replace an existing system or to install a LIMS in a laboratory previously without one. Projects to purchase and install a new LIMS are expected to be completed by the end of the 2-year award period. Applicants should consider a phased approach and submit requests for one phase or more, if appropriate, that can be completed within the 2-year timeframe of the DNA CEBR award.
 - **Existing LIMS**
Contracts may be established to purchase and add **DNA modules to an existing** LIMS or software upgrades for an existing LIMS or DNA module.
NOTE: See the definitions section of the NOFO for additional information.
 - **Accessories for LIMS**
Accessories for LIMS in the forensic biology and/or DNA section of the laboratory may be purchased. Allowable accessories include items such as barcode printers and barcode scanners; however, these do not include hardware items such as laptops, desktop computers, or computer tablets. A detailed justification for these items would need to be submitted with the application documents.

- **Annual maintenance and service contracts and licensing agreements for new LIMS**

Contracts may be established for annual maintenance and service contracts, as well as licensing agreements for users in the forensic biology/DNA section of the laboratory.

Expenses That Are NOT Permitted

Federal funds awarded under this program may only be used for the permissible uses of funds outlined above. Among other things, funds may not be used for:

- Salaries and benefits other than as discussed in “Permissible Uses of Funds.”
- Travel, other than authorized travel expenses associated with appropriate DNA training as discussed in “Permissible Uses of Funds.”
- Education that is of primary benefit to an individual (e.g., doctoral degree), personal development training(e.g., general human resources or staff retention trainings), or other trainings that are not directly related to the operation of a forensic DNA laboratory.
- Trial testimony (e.g., hearings, jury/judge trials, depositions) and associated travel costs.
- Construction and renovations.
- Direct administrative expenses that exceed 3 percent of the federal portion of the award.
- Equipment: Purchase of equipment or technologies that have not been approved for use by the NDIS, including personnel and supplies that would be needed to validate equipment or technologies not approved for use by NDIS. This includes Rapid DNA Analysis instruments or supplies proposed to be used in a way not compatible with the FBI’s most recent [QAS](#) revision and [explicitly approved by NDIS](#), or other instruments not available for purchase through a commercial entity. See definitions section for additional information about Rapid DNA.

Costs Associated With a Conference/Meeting/Training: An applicant that proposes to use award funds for activities related to a conference, meeting, training, or similar event should review the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on prior approval, planning, and reporting costs for a conference/meeting/training.

Costs Associated With Language Assistance and Access: If an applicant proposes a program or activity that would deliver services or benefits to individuals, the costs of taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to those services or benefits for individuals with limited English proficiency may be allowable in specific grant programs. Costs to provide reasonable accommodation and facilitate language access for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may also be allowable in specific grant programs. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on costs associated with language assistance.

For additional information about how to prepare a budget for federal funding, see the [Application Resource Guide](#) section on “[Budget Preparation and Submission Information](#)” and the technical steps to complete the budget form in JustGrants in the [Complete the Application in JustGrants: Budget](#) training.

Budget and Associated Documentation: Budget/Financial Attachments

Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable): An applicant with a current, federally approved indirect cost rate agreement should upload it as an attachment in JustGrants.

Indirect costs are costs of an organization that are not readily assignable to a particular project but are necessary for the operation of the organization and the performance of the project. Examples of costs usually treated as indirect include those incurred for operation and maintenance of offices or workspaces and salaries of administrative or support staff. The requirements for the development and submission of indirect cost proposals and cost allocation plans are listed in Appendices III–VII of 2 C.F.R. Part 200. A non-federal applicant should follow the guidelines applicable to its type of organization. See the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#) and the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on indirect cost rate agreements.

Consultant Rate (if applicable): OJP has established maximum rates for consultants; see the “Listing of Costs Requiring Prior Approval” section of the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#) for more information. If an applicant proposes a rate for a consultant on their project that is higher than the established maximum rate and receives an award, then the award recipient must submit a document requesting approval for the rate and cannot incur costs at the higher rate without prior OJP approval. The award recipient must provide justification for why the proposed rate is higher than the established maximum rate, such as why the rate is reasonable and consistent with that paid for similar services in the marketplace.

Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation for Awards Over \$250,000; Waiver (if applicable):

If an applicant proposes to hire employees with federal award funds, for any award of more than \$250,000, the recipient may not use federal funds to pay total cash compensation (salary plus cash bonuses) to any employee of the recipient at a rate that exceeds 110 percent of the maximum annual salary payable to a member of the federal government’s Senior Executive Service (SES) at an agency with a Certified SES Performance Appraisal System for that year. Applicants may request a waiver from this requirement by submitting the appropriate form. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the “Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation for Awards over \$250,000; Waiver.”

Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation (if applicable): This notice of funding opportunity expressly modifies the Application Resource Guide by not incorporating its “Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation” provisions. Applicants to this funding opportunity are not required to provide this disclosure.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (Category 2 – if applicable)

For each named partner involved in the project (whether as a subrecipient that will receive federal funds to carry out part of the federal award, or otherwise), applicants should include a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a letter of intent that confirms the partner’s agreement to support the project through commitments of staff time, space, services, or other project needs. MOUs or letters of intent demonstrate the commitment of partner organizations to participate in the project. An MOU is a formalized commitment of staff and/or resources that is signed by authorized representatives of both partner organizations. A letter of intent indicates the organizations’ intention to partner, but the details of the commitment have not been fully worked out and officially agreed to.

Each MOU should include the following:

- Names of the organizations involved in the agreement.
- What service(s) and other work will be performed under the agreement by what organization.
- Duration of the agreement.

MOUs should be submitted as one separate attachment to the application.

Unsigned draft MOUs may be submitted with the application, but the applicant should describe in a cover page to the attachment why it is unsigned.

Additional Application Components

The applicant should attach the additional requested documentation listed below in JustGrants.

- **DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Program Eligibility Certification:** Each applicant must submit a signed and completed [DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction \(CEBR\) Program Eligibility Certification form](#). This document further outlines requirements for a state or unit of local government to be eligible to receive a grant under the DNA CEBR program. **The certification must be submitted on the template provided.**
- **Program Income Declaration:** All applications submitted in response to this NOFO are to comply with the [Program Income Policy](#) for the FY25 DNA CEBR Program. Applicants should carefully read the updated policy to complete the FY25 DNA CEBR grant application as well as to ensure compliance with the policy post-award.
- **Applicants are to submit a Program Income Declaration with their grant applications.** The declaration should be attached as a separate document in the grant application, and the electronic file should be labeled as “Program Income Declaration.”

The Program Income Declaration should indicate one of the four statuses below for the applicant in light of any proposed activities to be funded by a grant award.

- 1) Does not employ a fee-for-service model or otherwise accept compensation from external organizations or jurisdictions to conduct DNA sample testing.
- 2) Employs a fee-for-service model or otherwise accepts compensation from external organizations or jurisdictions to conduct DNA sample testing but does not plan to use grant funds for any fee-for-service related activity.
- 3) Employs a fee-for-service model or otherwise accepts compensation from external organizations or jurisdictions to conduct DNA sample testing and does plan to accept fees for activities and/or services performed using grant funds, in whole or in part, from the programs referenced in this policy.
- 4) Employs a fee-for-service model or otherwise accepts compensation from external organizations or jurisdictions to conduct DNA sample testing but can claim the exclusion in Section 8 of the Program Income Policy and can produce the required documentation in support of this exclusion.

- **Potential Environmental Impact:** The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (Public Law No. 90-190; 42 U.S.C. § 4371, et seq.) established a national policy to promote the protection and enhancement of the environment. This policy was in response to growing concerns about the ecological balance and preservation of wildlife in the United States while meeting the demands of a growing population. Any BJA grant recipient with a project involving the use of chemicals, or involving construction, renovation, or remodeling, must complete the appropriate NEPA process prior to project initiation."

A Categorical Exclusion (CATEX)—a class of actions that, either individually or cumulatively, would not have a significant effect on the human environment and therefore would not require preparation of an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement under NEPA—may be available for some projects where the environmental impact is minimal. A Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) has been conducted that may cover certain projects, particularly those limited to routine indoor laboratory activities.

Alternatively, a grant recipient may be required to conduct an environmental assessment (EA), to assess the need for a project or proposed action, alternatives to the project/action, and the environmental impacts of the proposed and alternative project/action. If a grantee is required to conduct an EA, BJA will provide this service free of charge. Applicants do not need to allocate funding for this process in their grant applications.

Depending on a review of the project, after award grant recipients may be asked to provide additional information, so BJA can determine if either the CATEX or the PEA completes the NEPA process for particular projects or if an EA is necessary. For more information regarding NEPA, please visit <https://bja.ojp.gov/national-environmental-policy-act-nepa-guidance>.

- **Proof of DNA Laboratory Accreditation:** Acceptable types of documentation of current accreditation include an electronic (scanned) copy of the current accreditation certificate(s), a digital photograph of the current accreditation certificate(s), or a letter from the accrediting body that includes the certificate number. Additionally, if a certificate references another document that contains key information on the type or scope of the accreditation, provide a copy of that supplemental documentation.
- **Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable):** An application in response to this NOFO may require inclusion of Tribal authorizing documentation as an attachment. If applicable, the applicant will upload the Tribal authorizing documentation as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Tribal authorizing resolutions.
- **Letters of Support (Category 2):** A letter of support is from an entity or individual that knows the applicant's work. The letter tends to speak to the applicant's capacity to implement their proposed project for the benefit of the community. It differs from an MOU in that the entity is not committing staff, services, or supplies to help the applicant implement the project. Applicants should include, for each named supporting entity, a

signed letter of support that outlines the supporting entity's reasons for supporting the project.

Each letter of support may include descriptions of the following:

- Relationship between the applicant entity and the supporting entity.
- Need for and benefits that would be gained from the project.
- Applicant's capacity to complete the proposed project.

Letters of support should be signed and submitted as one separate attachment to the application in JustGrants.

- **Timeline:** Provide a timeline listing key activities and milestones, and the quarters during which they will take place.

Disclosures and Assurances

The applicant will address the following disclosures and assurances.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities: JustGrants will prompt each applicant to indicate if it is required to complete and submit a lobbying disclosure under 31 U.S.C. § 1352.

The applicant is required by law to complete and submit a lobbying disclosure form (Standard Form/SF-LLL) if it has paid or will pay any person to lobby in connection with the award for which it is applying AND this application is for an award in excess of \$100,000. This disclosure requirement is not applicable to such payments by an Indian Tribe, Tribal organization, or any other Indian organization that are permitted by other federal law.

Lobbying means (for this requirement) influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress. See 31 U.S.C. 1352; 28 C.F.R. part 69. Note: Most applicants do not engage in activities that trigger this disclosure requirement.

An applicant that is not required by law (31 U.S.C. 1352) to complete and submit a lobbying disclosure, should enter "No." By doing so, the applicant is affirmatively asserting (under applicable penalties) that it has nothing to disclose under 31 U.S.C. § 1352 with regard to the application for the award at issue.

Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items: To ensure funding coordination across grantmaking agencies, and to avoid unnecessary or inappropriate duplication of grant funding, the applicant must disclose if it has any pending applications for federal funding, including pending applications for subawards of federal funds, for the same project and the same budget items included in this proposal. Complete the JustGrants Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items form. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

DOJ Certified Standard Assurances: Review and accept the DOJ Certified Standard Assurances in JustGrants. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

DOJ Certifications: Review the DOJ document [Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirements; Coordination with Affected Agencies](#). An applicant must review and sign the certification document in JustGrants. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for more information.

Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High-Risk Grantees (if applicable): If applicable, submit the DOJ High-Risk Disclosure and Justification as an attachment in JustGrants. A DOJ high-risk recipient is an award recipient that has received a DOJ high-risk designation based on a documented history of unsatisfactory performance, financial instability, management system or other internal control deficiencies, noncompliance with award terms and conditions on prior awards, or that is otherwise not responsible. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Submission Dates & Times

Refer to [Basic Information: Key Dates and Times](#) for the submission dates and times.

Applicants should submit their applications as early as possible and recommended not later than 48 hours before the deadlines. To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline. Applicants will use the Certify and Submit feature in JustGrants to confirm that all required application components have been entered, which includes identifying the Authorized Representative for the applicant. Once the application is submitted, the Application Submitter, Authorized Representative, and Entity Administrator receive a confirmation email.

An applicant will receive emails after successfully submitting application components in Grants.gov and JustGrants and should retain all emails and other confirmations received from the SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and JustGrants systems.

Experiencing Technical Issues Preventing Submission of an Application (Technical Waivers)

If an applicant misses a deadline due to unforeseen technical issues with SAM.gov, Grants.gov, or JustGrants, the applicant may request a waiver to submit an application after the deadline. OJP will only consider requests to submit an application via alternative methods or after the deadline when the applicant can document that there is a technical issue with a government system that was beyond their control and that prevents submission of the application via the standard process prior to the deadlines. Issues resulting from circumstances within the applicant's control, such as failure to begin the SAM.gov, Grants.gov, or JustGrants registration and application process in sufficient time, will not be considered.

Requests and documentation must be sent to the OJP Response Center at OJP.ResponseCenter@usdoj.gov. Applicants should follow these steps if they experience a technical issue:

- 1. Contact the relevant help desk to report the issue and receive a tracking number.**

See [Basic Information: Contact Information](#) for the phone numbers, email addresses, and operating hours of the SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and JustGrants help desks. Reports of technical issues to the help desk must occur **before** the application deadline.

If an applicant calls the help desk and experiences a long wait time, they can also email the help desk to obtain a tracking number. Tracking numbers are generated automatically when an applicant emails the applicable service desk, and for this reason, long call wait times for support do not relieve the applicant of the responsibility of getting a tracking number.

2. If an applicant has technical issues with SAM.gov or Grants.gov, the applicant must contact the OJP Response Center at OJP.ResponseCenter@usdoj.gov within 24 hours of the Grants.gov deadline to request approval to submit after the deadline. The applicant's request will need to include:

- A description of the technical difficulties experienced (provide screenshots if applicable).
- A timeline of the applicant's submission efforts (e.g., date and time the error occurred, date and time of actions taken to resolve the issue and resubmit and date and time support representatives responded).
- An attachment of the complete grant application and all the required documentation and materials (this serves as a "manual" submission of the application).
- The applicant's unique entity identifier (UEI).
- Any SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and JustGrants Service Desk tracking/ticket numbers documenting the technical issue.

3. If an applicant has technical issues with JustGrants that prevent application submission by the deadline, the applicant must contact the OJP Response Center at OJP.ResponseCenter@usdoj.gov within 24 hours of the JustGrants deadline to request approval to submit after the deadline. See step 2 for the list of information the applicant must provide as part of its request.

As a reminder: the waiver request will not be considered unless it includes documentation of attempts to receive technical assistance to resolve the issue prior to the application deadline. OJP will review each waiver request and the required supporting documentation and notify the applicant whether the request for late submission has been approved or denied. An applicant that does not provide documentation of a technical issue (including all information previously listed), or that does not submit a waiver request within the required time period, will be denied.

For more details on the waiver process, OJP encourages applicants to review the "Experiencing Technical Issues" section in the [Application Resource Guide](#).



APPLICATION REVIEW

Responsiveness (Basic Minimum Requirements) Review

OJP screens applications to ensure they meet the basic minimum requirements (BMR) prior to conducting the merit review. Following are the basic minimum requirements for this funding opportunity. If OJP determines that an application does not include these elements, it will not proceed to merit review and will not receive any further consideration.

- The application is submitted by an eligible applicant.
- The requested award amount does not exceed the award ceiling.
- The application is responsive to the scope of the NOFO.
- The following application elements are included:
 - SF-424 (Grants.gov)
 - Proposal Narrative (JustGrants)
 - Budget detail form, which includes the budget items, their calculations, and explanation (JustGrants)
 - Submitted signed and completed FY2025 [DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction \(CEBR\) Program Eligibility Certification](#) form

Applicants whose application fails to meet the BMR are provided notice (including appeal instructions) within a few weeks after the submission due date.

Merit Review Criteria

Peer Review Criteria

Applications that meet the basic minimum requirements will be evaluated for technical merit by peer reviewers based on how the proposed project/program addresses the following criteria:

- **Statement of the Problem/Description of the Issue (25%):** What critical issue or problem the applicant is proposing to address with this project.
- **Project Goals and Objectives (15%):** How the proposed project will address the identified need and the purpose of the funding opportunity.
- **Project Design and Implementation (40%):** The strength of how the applicant will implement activities, including the soundness of the project design and how the activities align to the stated goals and objectives.
- **Capabilities and Competencies (10%):** The applicant's administrative and technical capacity to successfully complete this project.
- **Plan for Collecting the Data Required for This NOFO's Performance Measures (5%):** Evaluate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements and the plan for collecting the required data.
- **Budget (5%):** Completeness and cost effectiveness.

Programmatic and Financial Review Criteria

After the peer review, applications undergo additional programmatic and financial reviews. OJP staff may reach out to applicants during the programmatic or financial review if a submitted form is incomplete or needs to be updated. Note that OJP staff are not authorized to provide

information on peer review scores or comment on programmatic, risk, or budget/financial reviews while the merit review is in progress.

In addition to BMR and peer review criteria, other important considerations for OJP include geographic coverage, strategic priorities (including, but not limited to, the priority areas already mentioned, if applicable), available funding, past performance, and the extent to which the budget detail form accurately explains project costs that are reasonable, necessary, and otherwise allowable under federal law and applicable federal cost principles. If cost sharing/match is not required for this opportunity, applicants will not receive higher consideration by proposing a voluntary match contribution in their budget.

Additionally, OJP will give priority consideration to Category 1 applicants falling into the highest percentiles of performance measures (e.g., longest turnaround times) reported by CEBR laboratories in the preceding year. This data is posted on the BJA website at <https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/performance-measures/cebr-measures.pdf>.

Risk Review

Pursuant to the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, before award decisions are made, OJP also reviews information related to applicant risk. OJP assesses whether an applicant with one or more prior federal awards has a satisfactory record of performance, integrity, and business ethics, including by (among other things) checking whether the applicant is listed in SAM.gov as excluded from receiving a federal award.

Depending on the severity and nature of the risk factors, the risk assessment may result in the removal of an applicant from consideration or selection for award, or it may result in additional post-award conditions and oversight for an awarded applicant.

In addition, if OJP anticipates that an award will exceed \$250,000 in federal funds, OJP also must review and consider any information about the applicant that appears in the non-public segment of the integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov.

Important Note on Responsibility/Qualification Data (formerly FAPIIS): An applicant may review and comment on any information about its organization that currently appears in SAM.gov and was entered by a federal awarding agency. OJP will consider such comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in SAM.gov, in its assessment of the risk posed by the applicant.

Selection Process

All final award decisions will be made by the Assistant Attorney General, unless a statute explicitly authorizes award decisions by another official or there is written delegation of authority to another official. This official may consider not only peer review ratings and program office recommendations, but also other factors as indicated in the “Application Review” section to make final award decisions. For additional information on the application review process, see the [Application Resource Guide](#).



AWARD NOTICES

Federal Award Notices

For successful applicants, JustGrants will send a system-generated email to the Application Submitter, Authorized Representative, and Entity Administrator with information on accessing their official award package in JustGrants. The award package will include key information (such as funding amount and period of performance) as well as award conditions that must be followed. The Authorized Representative for the entity should accept or decline the award within 45 days of the notification. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on award notifications and instructions.

Applicants not selected for an award will receive notification after all award recipients have been notified. OJP also provides unsuccessful applicants with a summary of peer reviewer comments.

Future Funding Opportunities

OJP may, in certain cases, provide additional funding in future years to awards made under this funding opportunity through continuation awards. When making continuation award decisions, OJP will consider, among other factors, OJP's strategic priorities, a recipient's overall management of the award, and the progress of the work funded under the award.

Applications submitted under this FY 2025 funding opportunity may be funded in future fiscal years, dependent on, among other considerations, the merit of the applications and the availability of appropriations.



POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

Reporting

All award recipients under this funding opportunity will be required to submit the following reports and data:

- Quarterly financial reports.
- Semi-annual performance reports.
- Final financial and performance reports.
- If applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements or specific award conditions.
- Performance reporting must include a summary of activities carried out under the grant and an assessment of whether such activities are meeting the needs identified in the application.

See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on specific post-award reporting requirements, including performance measure data and the method for submitting reports in OJP's online systems. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent, and in appropriate cases, OJP may require additional reports.

Performance Measure Reporting

Award recipients are required to submit performance measure data in the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) semi-annually and separately submit a semi-annual performance report in JustGrants. Applicants selected for an award will receive further guidance on post-award reporting processes.

Program- and Award-Specific Award Conditions

OJP includes various conditions on its awards. These may include program-specific conditions, which typically apply to all recipients of a funding opportunity, and award-specific conditions, which are included to address recipient-specific issues (e.g., programmatic or financial risk). Recipients may view all conditions, and actions required to satisfy those conditions, in the award package in JustGrants.

Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the OJP-approved application, the recipient must comply with all award conditions and all applicable requirements of federal statutes and regulations, including the applicable requirements referred to in the assurances and certifications executed in connection with award acceptance. For additional information on these legal requirements, see the "Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements" section in the [Application Resource Guide](#).

Civil Rights Compliance

If a successful applicant accepts funding from OJP—as a recipient of OJP funding—that award recipient must comply with certain federal civil rights laws that prohibit the award recipient from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disability in how it delivers its program's services or benefits and in its employment practices. The civil rights laws

that may be applicable to the award include, but are not limited to, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the nondiscrimination provisions of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These and other federal civil rights laws are discussed in greater detail on OJP's [Legal Overview—FY 2025 Awards](#) webpage under the “Civil Rights Requirements” section. Additional resources are available from the [OJP Office for Civil Rights](#).

Compliance with Federal civil rights and nondiscrimination laws is material to the government's decision to make any award and payment under this program, including for purposes of the False Claims Act, and each recipient will be required to certify (in its acceptance of the conditions of the award) that it does not operate any programs (including any such programs having components relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion) that violate any applicable Federal civil rights or nondiscrimination laws.

See OJP's [Partnerships with Faith-Based and Other Neighborhood Organizations webpage](#) for specific information for faith-based organizations applying under this NOFO.

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls

Award recipients and subrecipients (including recipients or subrecipients that are pass-through entities) must, as described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.303, comply with standards for financial and program management. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Information Technology Security Clauses

An application in response to this NOFO may require inclusion of information related to information technology security. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for more information.

Other Reporting Requirements

Applicants and recipients are required to notify OJP if you know that you or any of your organization's principals for the award transaction are presently excluded or disqualified (*i.e.*, debarred or suspended) or otherwise meet any of the criteria in 2 C.F.R. 180.335. Recipients must comply with requirements in 2 C.F.R. Part 180, as implemented by DOJ in 2 C.F.R. Part 2867, which, among other things, require recipients to check certain information sources and, in some cases, notify the federal awarding agency prior to the agency awarding federal funds via contracts or subawards.

If a recipient's award includes a federal share of more than \$500,000 over the period of performance of the award, then the award (per 2 C.F.R. 200.113) will include a condition that may require the recipient to report and maintain certain information (relating to certain criminal, civil, and administrative proceedings) in SAM.gov. See the [Reporting Requirements page](#) for more information.



OTHER INFORMATION

Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities

OJP may conduct or support an evaluation of the projects and activities funded under this NOFO. For additional information on what should be included in the application, see the [Application Resource Guide](#) section “Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities.”

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act

See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for important information on the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. §§ 552 and 552a).

Applicants are advised not to include any unnecessary personally identifiable information, sensitive law enforcement information, or confidential financial information with the application.

Provide Feedback to OJP

See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on how to provide feedback to OJP.



APPLICATION CHECKLIST

BJA FY25 DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction (CEBR) – Competitive Grants Program

This application checklist has been created as an aid in developing an application. For more information, reference the “[OJP Application Submission Steps](#)” in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) and the [DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#).

SAM.gov Registration/Renewal

- Confirm that your entity’s registration in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) is active through the NOFO period. Submit a new or renewal registration in SAM.gov, if needed (see [Application Resource Guide](#)).

Grants.gov Registration

- Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password (see [Application Resource Guide](#)).
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC) (see [Application Resource Guide](#)).

Grants.gov Opportunity Search

- Search for the funding opportunity in Grants.gov using the opportunity number, assistance listing number, or keyword(s).
- Select the correct Competition ID.
- Access the funding opportunity and application package (see Step 7 under “[OJP Application Submission Steps](#)” in the [Application Resource Guide](#)).
- Sign up for Grants.gov email notifications (optional) (see [Application Resource Guide](#)).

Funding Opportunity Review and Project Planning

- Review all sections of the NOFO.
- Confirm your entity is eligible to receive funding (see [Eligibility: Eligible Applicants](#)).
- Confirm your proposed budget is within the allowable limits (see [Basic Information: Funding Details](#)), includes only allowable costs (see [Application Contents, Submission Requirements, and Deadlines: Budget Detail Form](#)), and includes cost sharing if applicable (see [Eligibility: Cost Sharing/Match Requirements](#)).
- Review the performance measures for this funding opportunity and confirm you will be prepared to collect and report on this data (see [Program Description: Performance Measures](#)).
- Review the “[Legal Overview—FY 2025 Awards](#)” in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#) and confirm you are prepared to follow the requirements.
- Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting under “Listing of Costs Requiring Prior Approval” in the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#) or see the [Application Resource Guide](#).

Submission Step 1: Grants.gov

After registering with SAM.gov submit the SF-424 in Grants.gov.

- Complete and submit the SF-424 by the deadline.

- Confirm Section 8F of the SF-424 lists the name and contact information of the individual **who will complete the application in JustGrants.**
- Confirm that, within 48 hours of your submission in Grants.gov, you receive four (4) Grants.gov email notifications:
 - A submission receipt
 - A validation receipt
 - A grantor agency retrieval receipt
 - An agency tracking number assignment
- If no Grants.gov receipt and validation email is received, or if error notifications are received, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, or support@grants.gov regarding technical difficulties (see the [Application Resource Guide](#) section on “[Experiencing Unforeseen Technical Issues](#)”).
- Confirm that, within 24 hours after receipt of confirmation emails from Grants.gov, the individual listed in Section 8F of the SF-424 receives an email from JustGrants with login instructions.

Submission Step 2: JustGrants

- Complete the following information:
 - Entity and User Verification (first-time applicants)
 - Standard Applicant Information
 - Proposal Abstract
 - Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
 - Agency Funding Priorities Inventory
- Upload the Proposal Narrative.*
- Complete the budget detail form.*
- Upload other budget/financial attachments, as applicable.
- Upload additional application components, as applicable.
 - Signed and completed [DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction \(CEBR\) Program Eligibility Certification form.](#)*
 - Proof of DNA Laboratory Accreditation
 - Program Income Declaration
 - MOU or Letter of Support, as applicable

Complete the required disclosures and assurances:

- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities and submission of SF-LLL, if prompted by the system
- Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items
- DOJ Certified Standard Assurances
- Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High-Risk Grantees
- Complete the required DOJ Certification on Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirements; Coordination with Affected Agencies.

****Note: Items designated with an asterisk must be submitted for an application to meet the basic minimum requirements review. If OJP determines that an application does not***

include the designated items, it will neither proceed to peer review nor receive further consideration.

JustGrants Review, Certification, and Application Submission

- Address any validation errors displayed on screen after attempted submission, then return to the “Certify and Submit” screen to submit the application.
- Note the confirmation message at the top of the page. Users will also receive a notification in the “bell” alerts confirming submission.
- If you do not receive an application submission confirmation email or validation from JustGrants, or if you receive an error notification, please contact the JustGrants Service Desk at 833-872-5175 or JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.