



National Institute of Justice

S O L I C I T A T I O N

Sarah V. Hart, Director

March 2003

Broadening Our Understanding of Violence Against Women From Diverse Communities

Notice: NIJ continues to experience delays in delivery of U.S. mail. If you are sending time-sensitive materials to NIJ, and in particular proposals responding to NIJ solicitations, we recommend that you use an alternative to the U.S. Postal Service. For delivery by commercial carriers and courier services, our ZIP Code is 20001.

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
May 9, 2003

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

John Ashcroft
Attorney General

Deborah J. Daniels
Assistant Attorney General

Sarah V. Hart
Director
National Institute of Justice

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

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

Broadening Our Understanding of Violence Against Women From Diverse Communities

Please Note

- T **Priority will be given to proposals for research that will inform State and local criminal justice policy and practice.**
- T Each proposal should contain a detailed listing of previous NIJ grant award performance, a privacy certificate, and a Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Form.
- T Ninety (90) days prior to the completion of the grant period, grantees are expected to submit in draft form a 400-word abstract, a 2,500-word executive summary, and a technical research report.
- T Performance requirements are being reinforced for final technical reports, data sets, and standard progress and financial reports. Grant drawdowns are not permitted if reports are not up to date.

For the purposes of this solicitation, violence against women is defined as aggressive behaviors that adversely and disproportionately affect women, including intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking. Proposals may include violence committed by intimates, acquaintances, and strangers. Intimate partner violence is defined as threatened or actual use of physical force against an intimate partner that either results in or has the potential to result in injury, harm, or death. Sexual violence is defined as the use of physical force or threat of force to compel a person to engage in a sexual act against her/his will, whether or not the act is completed. Sexual violence also includes sexual acts with persons who are unable to appraise a situation, who decline participation, or who communicate unwillingness to engage in a sexual act. Stalking is defined as a course of conduct directed at a specific person involving repeated visual or physical proximity; nonconsensual communication; verbal, written, or implied threats; or a combination thereof that would cause fear in a reasonable person, with repeated meaning on two or more occasions.¹

Priority will be given to studies that focus on women from diverse communities including ethnic, racial, cultural, and linguistic minority groups; women with disabilities; incarcerated women; religious communities; immigrant and refugee populations; or women with alternative sexual orientations. These populations are often considered understudied because sufficient research has not been devoted to determining incidence and prevalence, risk and protective factors, and mediating or moderating

I. Introduction

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is the research, development, and evaluation arm of the U.S. Department of Justice and is a component of the Office of Justice Programs. NIJ is soliciting proposals for research on violence against women ages 12 and older from diverse communities. **NIJ anticipates awarding up to four grants with a funding total up to \$1,000,000.**

¹ Definitions are derived from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Center for Injury Prevention and Control; and Tjaden, P., and Thoennes, N., 2000, *Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence*. NCJ 181867. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Justice.

influences that may affect intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or stalking among these groups.

Applicants should be familiar with the background that guides this current solicitation: the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103-322) and the Violence Against Women Act of 2000 (Public Law No. 106-386); the National Academy of Sciences Reports (*Understanding Violence Against Women and Violence in Families: Assessing Prevention and Treatment Programs*); the summary report from the *Broadening Our Understanding of Violence Against Women Among Racial, Ethnic, and Cultural Minorities Workshop* held in October, 2001; and the NIJ research program on Violence Against Women, including its current portfolio on violence against women in diverse communities and related research. NIJ's research portfolio on violence against women and family violence can be accessed at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/vawprog/welcome.html> or a copy can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770 (in the Washington, D.C., area at 202-307-1480).

Funding available under this solicitation is for research and evaluation only. Requests for funds for program support or development will not be considered.

Applicants are reminded that NIJ grants are funded for the full length of the project (unless otherwise noted) and the full costs (direct and indirect) should be included in the total budget requested. Projects may be jointly supported with other agencies if applicants have obtained funding from or applied to other governmental or nongovernmental funders. However, NIJ will not seek funding partners on behalf of applicants. Funding secured or pending from other sources should be noted in the proposal. Applications for funding should also be noted.

II. Background

Over the past decade, and particularly since the passage of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, there has been a substantial increase in research on violence against women. However, research on violence against women from diverse

communities has been limited. The lack of this type of research makes it difficult to obtain an accurate estimate of the prevalence and incidence of violence against women from these communities. In addition, much remains unknown about the factors that endanger these women or protect them from violence and about the physical and emotional consequences of such violence for women and their children.

In October 2001, NIJ sponsored a workshop entitled *Broadening Our Understanding of Violence Against Women Among Racial, Ethnic, and Cultural Minorities*. The goal of this workshop was to identify issues currently hindering research on violence against women from diverse communities. (Notes from this workshop are available on NIJ's Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/vawprog/broadening.html>.) One outcome of this workshop was the recommendation for additional research to better understand the dynamics of the violence that these women experience and how criminal justice and social service providers can better respond to it.

III. Areas of Research

The goal of this research solicitation is to improve policy and practice by advancing the empirical understanding of violence against women from diverse communities and the effectiveness of programs that assist victims.

NIJ seeks research that has the potential to be useful in reducing the impact of violence against women, increasing the safety of those women, and improving criminal justice system responses to this violence. NIJ has identified a number of priority research areas:

- ! ***Violence Against Women Program Evaluation***
Rigorous evaluations are solicited to determine the effectiveness of programs addressing the needs of victims and survivors of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking. Experimental designs are strongly encouraged. However, NIJ will consider other evaluation designs as required by the needs and constraints in a particular setting.

! ***Cost-Benefit and Cost-Effectiveness Analyses***
NIJ seeks cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analyses of programs that have been evaluated in order to determine which programs are most beneficial and cost effective.

! ***Prevalence and Incidence***
Research on the prevalence and incidence of violence against women from diverse communities is needed. Also needed are studies that examine risk and protective factors; various strategies of resistance that women use; and how race, class, poverty, and unemployment intersect in the development and persistence of violence against women from diverse communities.

! ***Measurement Development***
The development of culturally appropriate measures and the scientific determination of their validity and reliability for these populations is needed to advance our knowledge about violence against women from diverse communities.

! ***Responses to Violence Against Women***
Research on formal and informal responses to violence against women is needed, such as, family/peer responses to violence against women, or community-based responses (e.g., restorative justice models, faith-based initiatives, or other culturally based interventions). Research also is needed on communities' willingness and readiness to address violence against women and the extent to which diverse populations use justice systems to address violence against women in their communities.

IV. Requirements

NIJ has identified a number of important factors that must be addressed in the proposal.

! ***A Strong Theoretical Base***
Applicants must provide a strong theoretical basis for the program being evaluated or the hypotheses being tested.

! ***Rigor of Study Methodology***
Applicants must propose a study methodology of sufficient rigor to produce credible findings. The proposed methodology should be fully described in the proposal narrative. Specifically, plans for gaining access to, recruiting, and retaining study participants from diverse communities should be included in the proposal.

! ***Plan for Ensuring the Safety of Women***
Applicants must explicitly delineate a plan for ensuring the safety of study participants.

! ***Informed Consent***
Applicants are required to describe their plans for informed consent, as this can impact the implementation and results of the study.

! ***Definition of Success for Evaluations***
For evaluation research, applicants should explicitly describe their definition of success. For example, how many participants have to meet a specified criteria for the program to be considered successful; what does the program seek to change (e.g., increased safety and improved well-being of women); is change measured at program entrance, later in program, at completion, or subsequently; and what magnitude of change is required for the program to be considered successful?

! ***Policy and Practice Implications***
In a separate heading, applicants are required to address explicitly the policy and practice implications of their research. Two questions must be answered: (1) What information is likely to be learned from this research that we do not already know and (2) how is this information going to help practitioners or policymakers do their work better?

V. Suggestions for Applicants

NIJ seeks to underscore the importance of several factors in conducting meaningful research on violence

against women from diverse communities. These suggestions are not requirements for funding, but applicants who include one or more of the factors listed below will be given special consideration. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate as many innovative ideas into their proposals as is feasible.

! **Partnerships**

Applicants are encouraged to establish and maintain researcher-practitioner partnerships where appropriate to the research. The partners should jointly develop the proposal. NIJ also encourages applications in which the composition of the research team reflects the diversity of the population under study. Finally, NIJ encourages mentoring relationships in which new researchers collaborate with established researchers in the field.

! **Multi-Methods Research**

Applicants are encouraged to use qualitative and quantitative methods and measures and to collect data from multiple levels (i.e., individual, community, State, national). Where appropriate, applicants should use data from multiple individuals (e.g., the victim or survivor, children, service providers) and a variety of systems (e.g., criminal justice, social services, and public health.) Applicants are also encouraged to include information on the broader context of the violence.

! **Innovative Outcomes**

NIJ encourages applicants to use a variety of outcomes in their evaluation research related to women's experiences (e.g., perceptions of security and safety, perceived risk of future violence, consequences of victimization for women and their children, need for service and satisfaction with service provision, and satisfaction with quality of life).

! **Evaluation Designs**

NIJ encourages the use of rigorous experimental designs where appropriate and feasible. Applicants using an experimental design will need

to develop a detailed plan to ensure adherence to random assignment. This will include written agreement from key practitioners to use an experimental design and an indication of their commitment to adhere to random assignment. Applicants must provide justification for the chosen control group.

Alternative evaluation designs will be considered. Whichever design is chosen, applicants are encouraged to include a process evaluation that will form the foundation of a comprehensive evaluation (e.g., impact or outcome). Process evaluations alone will not be considered.

! **Recruitment**

Issues of recruitment are critical to violence against women research. Some recruitment issues include generalizability of the sample, impact of the screening process on the study, external validity of the study, effective methods for gaining access to female victims (e.g., partnership with community agencies), and strategies to improve recruitment efforts to ensure the research is useful to diverse communities.

! **Dissemination of Results**

NIJ is interested in expeditious and innovative methods to disseminate the results from all projects supported under this solicitation. Methods that would supplement the more traditional dissemination approaches are encouraged. Results of projects are expected to be reported to NIJ as they become available, at a minimum through semiannual progress reports. Applicants should discuss the types of other reports or products that would become available over the course of the project and the audiences, such as practitioners, to which they would be addressed.

VI. Selection Criteria

NIJ is firmly committed to a competitive process in making grant awards. External peer review panelists

consider both technical and programmatic merits of a proposed topic. Successful applicants must demonstrate to an independent peer review panel that (1) the gap in knowledge they seek to fill is critical to understanding crime and justice and is relevant to policy and/or practice, (2) the proposed research design is rigorous and appropriate to posited research questions, and (3) principal investigators are highly qualified to execute the design within the proposed budget and time lines. Institute staff then make recommendations to the NIJ Director based on the results of the independent reviews. Final decisions are made by the NIJ Director after consultation with Institute staff. Reviews of grant applications are based upon the following criteria:

- **Impact of the Project**
 - Importance of the problem.
 - Potential for significant advances in such areas as violence and victimization, drugs and crime, crime prevention, law enforcement, courts, and corrections.
 - Potential for advancement of scientific understanding of the problem area.
 - Relevance to improving the policy and practice of criminal justice and related agencies and for improving public safety, security, and quality of life.
- **Quality and Technical Merit**
 - Awareness of existing research.
 - Soundness of methodology and analytic or technical approach.
 - Innovation and creativity, where appropriate.
 - Feasibility of proposed project and awareness of pitfalls.
- **Capabilities, Demonstrated Productivity, and Experience of Applicants**
 - Qualifications and experience of personnel to proposed project.
 - Demonstrated ability to manage proposed effort.
- Adequacy of proposed budget, including time and personnel.
- Past performance on NIJ grants and contracts.
- **Budget Considerations**
 - Total cost relative to perceived benefit.
 - Budget appropriate to level of effort.
 - Use of existing resources to conserve costs.

The application review process (including peer review, decisionmaking, and other considerations) may take up to 6 months to complete. Notices of award and nonaward are distributed simultaneously about 180 days subsequent to the closing date of a solicitation. Notifications will be sent to the address as indicated on the Application for Assistance. Information regarding award status will not be available until notifications are distributed.

VII. How to Apply

Individuals interested in submitting proposals in response to this solicitation must complete the required application forms and related documents. Applicants must include all of the following information and completed forms to qualify for consideration:

PART A:

- Application for Federal Assistance—Standard Form (SF 424).
- Proposal abstract.
- Table of contents.
- Budget Detail Worksheet.
- Budget Narrative.
- Negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (if appropriate).
- Program narrative.
- References/Bibliography.
- Names and affiliations of all key persons, including applicants and subcontractor(s), advisors, consultants, and advisory board members. Include name of principal investigator, title, organizational

affiliation, department (if institution of higher education), address, phone, fax, and e-mail address.

- List all previous and current NIJ awards made to principal investigators, including grant numbers, information on final reports and other deliverables to NIJ (whether submitted or outstanding), and a listing of all publications (by NIJ or other publishers) resulting from each grant award.

PART B:

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

The Application Package is available at the following NIJ Web page:

http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding_app.htm

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

In item 10 of the Application, be sure to include 16.560 as the Catalog for Federal Domestic Assistance Number. Indicate the title to be “BROADENING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN FROM DIVERSE COMMUNITIES.”

Enter the title of your proposal in item 11. Start and end dates in item 13 should be adjusted to

accommodate a 6-month grant-making process. For this solicitation, proposed projects should not have a start date earlier than October 1, 2003.

The Proposal Abstract. The proposal abstract is a very important part of the application. The abstract is used in sorting applications for review by the appropriate independent peer panel. Once an award has been granted, the abstract is computerized and serves as a summary available to all interested parties for the duration of the grant. When read separately from the rest of the application, the abstract should serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants should concisely describe research goals and objectives, research design, and methods for achieving the goals and objectives. Length is not to exceed 400 words. Use the following two headers and instructions in developing the abstract:

Research Goals and Objectives:

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

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

Proposed Research Design & Methodology:

Methods. Describe the research method and/or design, including data to be used in addressing research questions, data collection procedures and instrumentation, access to data, and other methods or procedures unique to the proposed study.

Data Analysis and Products. Describe proposed techniques for data analysis and all expected products, including interim and final reports, instrumentation, and data to be archived under NIJ’s Data Resource Program.

The Program Narrative. The program narrative should provide information and detail that adequately describe the proposed project. It should include—

- Purpose, goals, and objectives.
- Review of relevant literature.
- Methodology.
- Data analysis and anticipated results and products.
- Implications of the proposed research for policy and practice.
- Staff/Research Management Plan.
- *Tables, charts, figures, and research timeline (not included in page limit).*

Page limit. The number of pages included in the “Program Narrative” section of the application must not exceed thirty (30), double-spaced pages in 12-point font, with 1-inch margins. Tables, charts, and figures describing the research design, calendar, analysis plan, and similar items are encouraged and will not be counted in the 30-page limitation.

Due date. Ten (10) copies (one unbound) of complete proposals **must be received** at the National Institute of Justice by 4:30 p.m. on **May 9, 2003**. Extensions to this deadline are not permitted. Faxed or electronically transmitted copies are not accepted. NIJ reserves the right to return incomplete applications, those not responsive to the scope of this solicitation, and those not complying with format requirements.

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

The length of the research study being proposed should be appropriate to the study design. However, to ensure that results are useful they must be available in order to inform policy in a timely fashion. Therefore, study time frames of 2 years or less are encouraged.

Application Materials. Applicants should obtain two packets: (1) application forms (including a sample budget worksheet) and (2) guidelines for submitting proposals (including requirements for proposal writers and requirements for grant recipients). To receive them, applicants can—

- Access NIJ on the Web and download application information at:

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

VIII. Performance Guidelines

To ensure compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), Public Law 103-62, this solicitation notifies successful applicants that they will be required to collect and report information and data that measure the results of the grant. In order to ensure accountability, the following performance standards are established for all NIJ grantees under this solicitation, including deliverables and other required reports as explained below.

Research & Evaluation Performance Standards

Grantees are required to submit in draft form the following deliverables ninety (90) days before the grant end date. NIJ reserves the right to waive any of the following requirements.

Deliverables Required 90 Days Before the Grant End Date

- Abstract (400 words).
- Executive Summary (2,500 words).
- Research Report.
- Electronic data and supporting documentation capable of being re-analyzed and used by other researchers.

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

Data sets must be received by the grant end date. Grant applicants should ensure that the proposed time line and budget accommodates these requirements.

In addition to the abstract, executive summary, research report, and data sets, grantees are required to submit financial status reports and progress reports.

Other Required Reports

- Quarterly financial status reports (Standard Form 269-A).
- Final Financial Status Report (Standard Form 269-A).
- Semiannual Categorical Assistance Progress Reports (OJP Form 4587).
- Final Categorical Assistance Progress Report (OJP Form 4587).

Financial Status Reports

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

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

Progress Reports

Recipients of funding also are required to submit Semiannual Categorical Assistance Progress Reports (OJP Form 4587). Two copies of the progress report must be submitted to the Office of the Comptroller twice a year even if there has been no substantive activity during the reporting period. The progress report should describe activities during the reporting period and status or accomplishment of objectives as set forth in the approved application for funding. For the duration of the award, progress reports must be submitted within 30 days after the end of the reporting periods (January 1 through June 30 and July 1 through December 31).

Additionally, a Final Progress Report—providing a summary of achievement of the goals and objectives of the award, significant results, and any products developed under the award—is due 90 days after the end date of the award. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if progress reports are delinquent.

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

This information will facilitate future program planning and/or research efforts and will allow OJP to provide the Congress and others with measurable results of its grants.

Research Report

The final research report, due in draft form 90 days prior to the end of the grant, should provide a comprehensive overview of the study and should include a detailed description of the research design, data, and methods; a full presentation of scientific findings; and a thorough discussion of the implications of the research findings for criminal justice practice and policy.

Evaluation Report

For *evaluation* studies, the research report should also include a section on **Measuring Program Performance**. This section should outline the measures used to evaluate program effectiveness, modifications made to those measures as a result of the evaluation, and recommendations regarding these and other potential performance measures for similar programs. (This information will be particularly valuable to NIJ and other Federal program agencies in implementing performance measures for federally funded criminal justice programs.)

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION AND HUMAN SUBJECT PROTECTION

The Department of Justice (DOJ) regulations at 28 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 22 require recipients of NIJ research funds to protect personally identifiable information. In addition, regulations at 28 CFR Part 46 require that all research involving human subjects be reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB). The application package must contain a Privacy Certificate, consistent with 28 CFR 22, that outlines specific procedures for protecting private information. Also, a copy of the IRB's approval must be submitted to NIJ prior to initiating any research activities involving human subjects.

Information regarding Confidentiality and Human Subjects Protections, including instructions and forms, may be found at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/humansubjects/index.html>.

Guidance and information. Applicants who wish to receive additional guidance and information may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770. Center staff can provide assistance or refer applicants to an appropriate NIJ professional.

Send applications to:

Office of Research and Evaluation
Broadening Our Understanding of Violence Against
Women From Diverse Communities
National Institute of Justice
810 Seventh Street N.W., Rm. 7324
Washington, DC 20531
[overnight courier ZIP code 20001]

For more information on the National Institute of Justice, please contact:

National Criminal Justice Reference Service
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-851-3420
e-mail: askncjrs@ncjrs.org

You can view or obtain an electronic version of this document from the NIJ Web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>) or the NCJRS Justice Information Center Web site (<http://www.ncjrs.org>).

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