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Solicitation		
Research on Firearms & Violence		

Notice:

You *must* submit your application using the Office of Justice Programs' automated Grants Management System. Paper applications will not be accepted. We suggest you begin the process as soon as possible. To start the process, go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>.

Deadline:

January 27, 2004

SL 000640

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

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on the World Wide Web at:

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

Research on Firearms & Violence

I. Introduction

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is the research, development, and evaluation agency of the U.S. Department of Justice and a component of the Office of Justice Programs. The Institute provides objective, independent, evidence-based knowledge and tools to enhance the administration of justice and public safety. The Institute solicits proposals to inform its search for the knowledge and tools to guide policy and practice.

NIJ requests proposals to continue its research program on gun violence reduction with the goal of gaining new knowledge and improving criminal justice policy and practice. Specific areas of interest include (1) **demand-side research**, which would examine and assess the effectiveness of strategies to prevent, deter, and/or control gun violence and its perpetrators; and (2) **supply-side research**, which would be directed at better understanding, detection, and control of the various types of illegal channels or markets through which firearms are acquired for use in crime and violence by offenders, juveniles, and other prohibited categories of people.

Due date: The due date is listed on the cover of this announcement and on the NIJ Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>. Extensions to the deadline are generally not granted.

Page limit: The program narrative section of your proposal must not exceed 30 double-spaced pages in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Tables, charts, figures, government forms, budget, budget narrative, and appendixes do not count toward the 30-page limit.

Reasons for rejection: NIJ may reject applications that are incomplete, do not respond to the scope of the solicitation, do not comply with format requirements, or are submitted after the deadline. No additions to the original submission are allowed.

How to submit proposals to NIJ: Complete details about how to apply for funding are in "NIJ Guidelines for Submitting Applications," available on the NIJ Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>.

II. Proposal Topics

Background

In addressing the reduction of violence and its consequences, one of the most critical issues is the role of firearms in contributing to violent crime, serious injury, and death.

Since the late 1980s, NIJ has funded a growing portfolio of studies directed at gun violence in the United States. Earlier studies intended to build knowledge included a survey of gun ownership in America and surveys of offenders and juveniles on their acquisition and use of guns.

More recently, much of the Institute's firearms violence research has focused on two general priority areas. One of these encompasses **demand-side studies**, which have tested and assessed gun violence reduction efforts intended to prevent, control, and deter gun offenders and high-risk groups. These studies have ranged from evaluations of specific strategies, such as the Consent-to-Search program in St. Louis and the Handgun Intervention Program in Detroit, to large-scale comprehensive problem-solving programs, such as the Boston Ceasefire Program, and the U.S. Department of Justice's multi-city Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) and Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). The second major area includes **supply-side studies** of illegal gun markets and the detection, prevention, and control of firearms trafficking. In supporting such research, NIJ and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) have maintained a close partnership, both as cofunders of studies and as joint participants in these efforts.

Scope of Work for the Study

This solicitation requests proposals to continue NIJ's work in both demand-side and supply-side gun violence reduction research, building on the findings of previous and current work to advance the state of knowledge and improve policy and practice. Specific areas of interest include the following:

A. Demand-Side Studies Assessing Gun Violence Reduction Strategies

Through Project Safe Neighborhoods and other programs, many innovative strategies have been initiated with the goal of preventing, deterring, and controlling gun violence and its perpetrators. However, very few of these strategies have been adequately evaluated. The Institute therefore welcomes proposals to conduct scientifically sound assessments of such efforts, including both individual strategies of particular law enforcement agencies or other agencies and more comprehensive, multi-agency problem-solving initiatives. NIJ recognizes that

pure randomized and quasi-experimental evaluation models may not be feasible in many of these cases and that more innovative methodologies may be required. However, studies should be as rigorous as possible, and care should be taken to objectively monitor the program implementation process and to scientifically measure not only outputs but also the actual societal impacts of programs on gun violence.

B. Supply-Side Studies of Illegal Firearms Markets

Reducing firearms crime and violence requires understanding the illegal primary (retail) and secondary (post-retail) markets and patterns of gun acquisition, because those markets and acquisition patterns facilitate access to guns by offenders, juveniles, and other prohibited categories of people. Therefore, NIJ recommends research that would further increase the understanding of how guns travel from legal to illegal markets, how these patterns of black market access are related to firearms crime and violence, and how law enforcement can interrupt this flow of guns into the hands of prohibited, high-risk individuals and groups without interfering with legitimate acquisition of and access to firearms by law-abiding adults.

Of particular interest is research on such illegal market sources as corrupt Federal Firearms Licensees (FFLs); straw purchases; illegal sales, if any, at gun shows and pawn shops; illegal street sales and swaps; and gun thefts. This research should build on current studies that are mapping illegal markets in multiple cities using ATF tracing data but should also include other sources of more detailed information, such as police records, Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) information, interviews with law enforcement and market participants (buyers and sellers), and ethnographic research. Issues to cover in these studies include the characteristics and criminal backgrounds of gun purchasers who use illegal outlets, the types of firearms associated with these sources, and the relative use of these and other guns in subsequent crime and violence.

III. General Requirements and Guidance

This section describes the main requirements for submitting your proposal. Complete instructions are in “NIJ Guidelines for Submitting Applications,” available on the NIJ Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>.

- A. Submit applications online:** Paper applications are not accepted. Applications must be submitted through the Office of Justice Programs’ online Grants Management System. NIJ suggests you begin the process early, especially if this is the first time you have used the system. To begin, go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>.

- B. Relevance of the project for policy and practice:** Higher-quality proposals clearly explain the practical implications of the project. They connect technical expertise with policy and

practice. To ensure that the project has strong relevance for policy and practice, some researchers and technologists collaborate with practitioners and policymakers. You may include letters showing support from practitioners, but they carry less weight than clear evidence that you understand why policymakers and practitioners would benefit from your work and how they would use it. While a partnership may affect State or local activities, it should also have broader implications for others across the country.

- C. Equal opportunity for all applicants:** It is OJP policy that faith-based and community organizations that statutorily qualify as eligible applicants under OJP programs are invited and encouraged to apply for awards. Faith-based and community organizations will be considered for an award on the same basis as any other eligible applicants and, if they receive awards, will be treated on an equal basis with non faith-based and community organization grantees in the administration of such awards. No eligible applicant or grantee will be discriminated against on the basis of its religious character or affiliation, religious name, or the religious composition of its board of directors or persons working in the organization.
- D. Cofunding is not required:** You are not required to combine NIJ funds with other funds (for example, you do not need matching funds), but if you intend to use multiple funding sources to support your proposed effort, the budget you submit must show the other funds.
- E. Number of grants to be awarded:** NIJ's grant award process is highly competitive. The number of awards to be made depends on the availability of funds and the number and quality of applications received.
- F. When awards will be made:** The review and approval process takes about 6 months. Therefore, you should not propose to begin work until at least 6 months after the deadline on the cover of this solicitation. Also, you should not expect to receive notification of a decision for at least 6 months after that date. Lists of awards are updated regularly on NIJ's Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>.
- G. Financial audits are required:** If your organization spends \$500,000 or more of Federal funds during the fiscal year, you may be asked to submit an organization-wide financial and compliance audit report before any award is made. The audit must be performed in accordance with the U.S. General Accounting Office Government Accounting Standards and must conform to Chapter 19 of the Office of Justice Programs' *Financial Guide* (available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/FinGuide>). You may include the costs of complying with these audits in the proposed budget submitted as part of your application. Detailed information regarding the independent audit is available in Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133 (available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars>).

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- H. An environmental assessment may be required:** All award recipients must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). To ensure NEPA compliance, NIJ may require some award recipients to submit additional information.
- I. A DUNS number is required:** The Office of Management and Budget requires that all businesses and nonprofit applicants for Federal funds include a DUNS (Data Universal Numeric System) number in their application for a new award or renewal of an award. Applications without a DUNS number are incomplete. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of entities receiving Federal funds. The identifier is used for tracking purposes and to validate address and point of contact information. NIJ will use the DUNS number throughout the grant life cycle. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, one-time activity. Obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or by applying online at <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com>. Individuals are exempt from this requirement.
- J. Funds cannot be used to lobby.** Under the Anti-Lobbying Act (18 U.S.C. § 1913), grantees generally may not use appropriated funds to support the enactment, repeal, or modification of any law, regulation, or policy at any level of government. For the complete rules and regulations, see “NIJ Guidelines for Submitting Applications” at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm> and the OJP *Financial Guide* at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/FinGuide>.
- K. What will *not* be funded:** Typically, NIJ *does not* fund the following:
1. Provision of training or direct service.
 2. Proposals primarily to purchase equipment, materials, or supplies. (Your budget may include these items if they are necessary to conduct applied research, development, demonstration, evaluation, or analysis, but NIJ does not fund proposals that are primarily to purchase equipment.)
 3. Work that will be funded under another specific proposal
 4. Basic or pure research.
- L. Call for assistance:**
1. For technical guidance about using the Grants Management System, call the hotline at 1-888-549-9901.
 2. For questions about this solicitation, the research being solicited, or other NIJ funding opportunities, contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 1-800-421-6770.

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- M. Cost of proposed work:** NIJ expects to make up to 5 awards, depending on funds available and number of high-quality applications. If you propose a project that exceeds the amount of money available for this solicitation, we recommend that you divide the project into phases, stages, or tasks so that NIJ can consider making an award for a specific portion of the work. NIJ cannot guarantee that subsequent phases, stages, or tasks will be funded. Such additional funding depends on NIJ's resources and your satisfactory completion of each phase, stage, or task. Note: Deliverables (e.g., a final report) will be required at the end of each phase, stage, or task.

IV. Selection Criteria

NIJ is firmly committed to the competitive process in awarding grants. All proposals are subjected to an independent peer-review panel evaluation. External peer-review panelists consider both technical and programmatic merits. Panelists are selected based on their expertise in subject areas pertinent to the proposals.

Peer-review panelists evaluate each proposal and give their assessments to NIJ. NIJ staff then recommend to the NIJ Director which proposals are most worthy of an award. The Director makes final award decisions.

Successful applicants must demonstrate the following:

A. Understanding of the problem and its importance.

Applicants should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the problem they propose to address, and include an appropriate literature review.

B. Quality and technical merit.

1. Awareness of the state of current research or technology.
2. Soundness of methodology and analytic and technical approach.
3. Feasibility of proposed project and awareness of pitfalls.
4. Innovation and creativity (when appropriate).

C. Impact of the proposed project.

1. Potential for significant advances in scientific or technical understanding of the problem.
2. Potential for significant advances in the field.

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3. Relevance for improving the policy and practice of criminal justice and related agencies and improving public safety, security, and quality of life.
 4. Affordability and cost effectiveness of proposed end products, when applicable (e.g., purchase price and maintenance costs for a new technology or cost of training to use the technology).
 5. Perceived potential for commercialization and/or implementation of a new technology (when applicable).

D. Capabilities, demonstrated productivity, and experience of applicants.

1. Qualifications and experience of proposed staff.
2. Demonstrated ability of proposed staff and organization to manage the effort.
3. Adequacy of the plan to manage the project, including how various tasks are subdivided and resources are used.
4. Successful past performance on NIJ grants and contracts (when applicable).

E. Budget.

1. Total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit.
2. Appropriateness of the budget relative to the level of effort.
3. Use of existing resources to conserve costs.

F. Dissemination strategy.

1. Well-defined plan for the grant recipient to disseminate results to appropriate audiences, including researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.
2. Suggestions for print and electronic products NIJ might develop for practitioners and policymakers.

V. Requirements for Successful Applicants

If your proposal is funded, you will be required to submit several reports and other materials as follows:

- A. Final report:** The final report should be a comprehensive overview of the project and should include a detailed description of the project design, data, and methods; a full

presentation of scientific findings; and a thorough discussion of the implications of the project findings for criminal justice practice and policy. It must contain an abstract of no more than 400 words and an executive summary of no more than 2,500 words.

A draft of the final report, abstract, and executive summary must be submitted 90 days before the end date of the grant. The draft report will be peer reviewed upon submission. The reviews will be forwarded to the principal investigator with suggestions for revisions. The principal investigator must then submit the revised final report, abstract, and executive summary by the end date of the grant. The abstract, executive summary, and final report must be submitted in both paper and electronic formats.

For evaluation studies, the report should 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.)

- B. Interim reports:** Grantees must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, and a final progress report. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent. Post-award reporting requirements are described in “NIJ Guidelines for Submitting Applications,” available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>.
- C. Documents that protect the confidentiality of information and human subjects:** Federal regulations require applicants for NIJ funding to outline specific procedures for protecting private information about individuals as part of the Privacy Certificate submitted with the application package. For complete details, see “NIJ Guidelines for Submitting Applications,” available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>.
- D. Electronic data:** Some grant recipients will be required to submit electronic data and supporting documentation, such as a codebook or dictionary, capable of being re-analyzed and used by other researchers. The materials must be submitted by the end date of the grant. Grant applicants should ensure that the proposed timeline and budget accommodate these requirements.
- E. Performance guidelines:** NIJ collects data to comply with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), Public Law 103-62. Generally, these data are contained in a grantee’s final report (discussed in Section V of this solicitation), but NIJ may request

additional information to facilitate future planning and to ensure accurate reporting to Congress and others on the measurable results of grants. For complete details, see “NIJ Guidelines for Submitting Applications,” available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>.

Tips for Submitting Your Application

1. Begin the application process early—especially if you have never used the online Grants Management System before. NIJ will not accept applications received after the closing date and time listed on the cover. To start the process, go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>.
2. Be sure your application package includes:
 - Abstract of no more than 400 words.
 - Complete budget, including detailed worksheet and narrative.
 - Program narrative.
3. Review “NIJ Guidelines for Submitting Applications” for complete instructions, available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>.
4. Although your proposal may budget for the purchase of equipment if the equipment is necessary to conduct the project, NIJ will not fund applications that are primarily to purchase equipment, materials, or supplies.
5. Call for help:
 - For technical guidance about the Grants Management System, call the hotline at 1-888-549-9901.
 - For questions about this solicitation, the research being solicited, or other NIJ funding opportunities, contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 1-800-421-6770.

View or print a copy of this document from the NIJ Web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>) or request one by calling NCJRS at 1-800-851-3420 or e-mailing askncjrs@ncjrs.org.

The National Institute of Justice is the research, development, and evaluation agency of the U.S. Department of Justice.

NIJ provides objective, independent, evidence-based knowledge and tools to enhance the administration of justice and public safety.

NIJ is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime.