Frequently Asked Questions

OJJDP FY2015 Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Membership and Accreditation Program and Training and Technical Assistance

Solicitation Specific FAQs

1. **What is the deadline for this solicitation?**

   All applications are due by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on May 26, 2015.

2. **Who is eligible to apply?**

   Eligible applicants are nonprofit (including tribal nonprofit) organizations. As set forth in the authorizing language in 42 U.S.C. Section 13013, the successful applicant shall be (1) a national organization that has broad membership among court-appointed special advocate programs and in providing training and technical assistance to court-appointed special advocate programs; or (2) a local public or not for profit agency that has demonstrated the willingness to initiate, sustain, and expand a court-appointed special advocate program.

3. **Is there a match requirement?**

   This solicitation does not require a match. However, if a successful application proposes a voluntary match amount, and OJP approves the budget, the total match amount incorporated into the approved budget becomes mandatory and subject to audit.

4. **Is there a maximum funding amount that I can apply for?**

   The maximum funding amount that can be applied for is $5,228,268.

5. **What is the CFDA number?**

   The Catolog of Federal Domestic Assistance number for this solicitation is 16.756.

6. **How many applications were received last year and how many awards were made?**

   OJJDP did not release a competitive solicitation for this project last year. In prior award years, there were two separate solicitations for Membership and Accreditation and Training and Technical Assistance. One award was made for each category in FY2012. For FY2015, these two areas have been combined. OJJDP posts the prior year's awards on its website.

7. **What date should I list as the start date on the SF-424 form?**

   Applicants may begin their proposed project dates on or after October 1, 2015.

General FAQs

8. How do I apply for this funding opportunity?

Applicants will submit their applications through Grants.gov, a "one-stop storefront" to find federal funding opportunities and apply for funding. To find complete instructions on how to register and submit an application, go to www.Grants.gov.

9. Who do I contact for help with Grants.gov?

If the applicant experiences technical difficulties during this process, call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays.

10. What is a DUNS number and how do I get one?

The Office of Management and Budget requires that all agencies, 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 tracking entities receiving federal funds. The identifier is used to validate address and point of contact information. The DUNS number will be used throughout the grant life cycle. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, simple, one-time activity. Call 1-866-705-5711 or apply online at www.dunandbradstreet.com to obtain a number. Individuals are exempt from this requirement.

11. What is the System for Award Management (SAM), and how do I register?

SAM replaces the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database as the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. OJP requires all applicants (other than individuals) for federal financial assistance to maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Applicants must register in SAM to successfully register in Grants.gov. (Previously, organizations that had submitted applications via Grants.gov were registered with CCR, as it was a requirement for Grants.gov registration. SAM registration replaces CCR as a pre-requisite for Grants.gov registration.) Applicants must update or renew their SAM registration annually to maintain an active status.

Applicants that were previously registered in the CCR database must, at a minimum:

- Create a SAM account;
- Log into SAM and migrate permissions to the SAM account (all the entity registrations and records should already have been migrated).

Applicants that were not previously registered in the CCR database must register in SAM prior to registering in Grants.gov. Information about SAM registration procedures can be accessed at www.sam.gov.

12. What information is included in the page limit?

The program narrative should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins, not exceeding 30 pages of 8½ by 11 inches, and use a standard 12-point font, preferably Times New Roman. Pages should be numbered "1 of 30," etc. The tables, charts, pictures, etc., including all captions, legends, keys, subtext, etc., may be single-spaced, and will count in the 30-page limit. Material required under the "Project Abstract", "Budget and Budget Narrative", and "Other Attachments" sections will not count toward the program narrative page count. In addition, applicants may provide bibliographical references as a separate attachment that will not count toward the 30 page program narrative limit. If the program narrative fails to comply with these length-related restrictions, OJJDP may consider the application to be noncompliance in peer review and final award decisions.

13. Is there a budget format or sample that is available?

A budget detailed worksheet form is available on OJP's Web site. When using this form, you must also include a budget narrative, in MS Word or PDF format, as a separate attachment.

14. In my application, do I need to address all performance measures listed in this specific solicitation?

A summary of the specific performance measures that OJJDP will use to measure grantee performance is under the section within the solicitation titled Performance Measures. Applicants should include a brief narrative discussion in their application that indicates their understanding of the performance measures for this solicitation and how they intend to provide the required data to OJJDP. Applicants do not need to reiterate the required measures.

15. Can I submit a paper version via U.S. mail instead of an electronic application through the Grants.gov system?

No. Applicants must submit their applications electronically. OJJDP will not accept paper submissions.

16. How does the review and awarding process work? How can I track the status of my application?

Peer reviewers will review the applications submitted under this solicitation that meet basic minimum requirements. OJJDP may use either internal peer reviewers, external peer reviewers, or a combination, to review the applications. An external peer reviewer is an expert in the subject matter of a given solicitation who is NOT a current DOJ employee. An internal reviewer is a current DOJ employee who is well-versed or has expertise in the subject matter of this solicitation. A peer review panel will evaluate, score, and rate applications that meet basic minimum requirements. Peer reviewers' ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only. In addition to peer review ratings, considerations for award recommendations and decisions may include, but are not limited to, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding.

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with OJJDP, reviews applications for potential discretionary awards to evaluate the fiscal integrity and financial capability of

applicants; examines proposed costs to determine if the budget detail worksheet and budget narrative accurately explain project costs; and determines whether costs are reasonable, necessary, and allowable under applicable federal cost principles and agency regulations. During that time, you may be asked additional questions about your application for clarification purposes.

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, all final award decisions will be made by the Assistant Attorney General, who also may give consideration to factors including, but not limited to, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding when making awards.

To prevent compromising the integrity of the competitive review process, OJJDP will not discuss details regarding the status of your applications until all awards have been made to grant recipients. It is anticipated that awards will be made no later than September 30, 2015.

17. How will I be notified if my agency is selected to receive an award?

Both the point of contact and the authorizing official listed on the grant application will receive an e-mail award notification, which will provide further information on procedures for receiving funds. Applicants receiving an award will be notified by September 30, 2015.

18. How will I be notified if my agency is not selected to receive an award?

Both the point of contact and the authorizing official listed on the grant application will receive an e-mail notification and a summary of the peer review comments by October 30, 2015.

19. I am experiencing technical difficulties submitting my applications to Grants.gov. Is there an alternate way to submit my application?

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline or the SAM Help Desk to report the technical issue and receive a tracking number. Then applicant must e-mail the Response Center at responsecenter@ncjrs.gov **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application. The e-mail must describe the technical difficulties, and include a timeline of the applicant's submission efforts, the complete grant application, the applicant's DUNS number, and any Grants.gov Help Desk or SAM tracking number(s). **Note: OJJDP does not automatically approve requests.** After the program office reviews the submission, and contacts the Grants.gov or SAM Help Desks to validate the reported technical issues, OJP will inform the applicant whether the request to submit a late application has been approved or denied. If OJP determines that the applicant failed to follow all required procedures, which resulted in an untimely application submission, OJP will deny the applicant's request to submit their application.

The following conditions are generally insufficient to justify late submissions:

- failure to register in SAM or Grants.gov in sufficient time
- failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its Web site
- failure to follow each instruction in the OJP solicitation

- technical issues with the applicant's computer or information technology environment, including firewalls.

Notifications regarding known technical problems with Grants.gov, if any, are posted at the top of the OJP funding Web page.