



The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#) (BJS) is pleased to announce that it is seeking to fund a redesign of the State Court Processing Statistics (SCPS) project. As the statistical arm of the U.S. Department of Justice, BJS is responsible for the collection, analysis, publication, and dissemination of statistical information on crime, criminal offenders, victims of crime, and the operations of criminal justice systems at all levels of government. This survey, a component of the BJS Criminal Justice Statistics Program, furthers the mission of the Department and the Office of Justice Programs, by working in partnership with the justice community to identify the most pressing challenges confronting the justice system and to provide state-of-the-art knowledge and information in support of innovative strategies and approaches for dealing with these challenges.

State Court Processing Statistics (SCPS) Redesign Solicitation

Eligibility

Applications for funds may be submitted by both for-profit (commercial) and nonprofit organizations.

(See more information in the "Eligibility" section on page 3)

Deadline

All applications are due by 5.00 p.m. Eastern time on May 15, 2008.

(See "Deadline: Application" on page 3)

Contact Information

For assistance with the programmatic requirements of this solicitation, contact Thomas H. Cohen, Statistician, Bureau of Justice Statistics, at 202-307-0765 or via e-mail at askbjs@usdoj.gov. Include "scps08" in the subject line.

This application must be submitted through Grants.gov. For technical assistance with submitting the application, call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 1-800-518-4726.

2008-BJS-1833

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State Court Processing Statistics (SCPS) Redesign CFDA Number 16.734

Overview

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is seeking proposals to redesign the State Court Processing Statistics Project (SCPS) project. The purpose of this award is to provide funding to redesign SCPS and enhance the project's data collection capabilities. SCPS is a recurring data collection project involving the compilation of felony cases processed in 40 large urban counties chosen to be representative of the 75 most populous counties in the U.S. Approximately 15,000 felony cases filed on certain days in May of every even numbered year are tracked for up to 1 year in these 40 sampled counties. The data collected includes current arrest charges, demographic characteristics, prior arrests and convictions, criminal justice status at arrest, type of pretrial release or detention, bail amount, court appearance record, adjudication outcome, and sentence received if convicted. The SCPS data collection platform has remained essentially unchanged since its inception in 1988. This solicitation will provide an opportunity to re-conceptualize SCPS to take into account the increasing levels of automation in state courts and other enhanced collection mechanisms that have occurred since the late 1980s. BJS is authorized to issue this solicitation under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Street Act of 1968, Section 302, as amended.

Deadline: Registration

Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, if you are a first time registrant it could take up to several weeks to have your registration validated and confirmed and to receive your user password. It is highly recommended you start the registration process as early as possible to prevent delays in submitting your application package to our agency by the deadline specified. There are three steps that you must complete before you are able to register: 1) Register with Central Contractor Registry (CCR); 2) Register yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and, 3) Be authorized as an AOR by your organization. For more information, go to www.grants.gov. **Note: Your CCR Registration must be renewed once a year. Failure to renew your CCR registration may prohibit submission of a grant application through Grants.gov.**

Deadline: Application

The due date for applying for funding under this announcement is May 15, 2008, 5:00 p.m. Eastern time.

Eligibility

Both for-profit (commercial) and non-profit organizations may apply for funds. However, consistent with OJP fiscal requirements, for-profit organizations are not allowed to make a profit as a result of this award or to charge a management fee for the performance of this award.

Faith-Based and Other Community Organizations: Consistent with President George W. Bush's Executive Order 13279, dated December 12, 2002, and 28 C.F.R. Part 38, it is DOJ policy that faith-based and other community organizations that statutorily qualify as eligible applicants under DOJ programs are invited and encouraged to apply for assistance awards to fund eligible grant activities. Faith-based and other community organizations will be considered for awards on the same basis as other eligible applicants and, if they receive assistance awards, will be treated on an equal basis with all other grantees in the administration of such awards. No eligible applicant or grantee will be discriminated for or 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.

Faith-based organizations receiving DOJ assistance awards retain their independence and do not lose or have to modify their religious identity (e.g., removing religious symbols) to receive assistance awards. DOJ grant funds, however, may not be used to fund any inherently religious activity, such as prayer or worship. Inherently religious activity is permissible, although it cannot occur during an activity funded with DOJ grant funds; rather, such religious activity must be separate in time or place from the DOJ-funded program. Further, participation in such activity by individuals receiving services must be voluntary. Programs funded by DOJ are not permitted to discriminate in the provision of services on the basis of a beneficiary's religion.

If your organization is a faith-based organization that makes hiring decisions on the basis of religious belief, it may be entitled, under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb, to receive federal funds and yet maintain that hiring practice, even if the law creating the funding program contains a general ban on religious discrimination in employment. For the circumstances under which this may occur, and the certifications that may be required, please see the reference to the Civil Rights Compliance section under "Additional Requirements" included herein.

American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Tribes and/or Tribal Organizations: Applicants are limited to for-profit (commercial) organizations, non-profit organizations, faith-based and community organizations, institutions of higher learning, and consortiums with demonstrated organization and community-based experience working with American Indian and Alaska Native communities, including tribal commercial and non-profit organizations, tribal colleges and universities, and tribal consortiums.

All tribal applications must be accompanied by a current authorizing resolution of the governing body of the tribal entity or other enactment of the tribal council or comparable government body. If the grant will benefit more than one tribal entity, a current authorizing resolution or other enactment of the tribal council or comparable government body from each tribal entity must be included. If the grant application is being submitted on behalf of a tribal entity, a letter or similar document authorizing the inclusion of the tribal entity named in the application must be included.

Applicants are encouraged to review the Civil Rights Compliance section under "Additional Requirements" in this announcement.

Project-Specific Information

Since 1988, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has sponsored a biennial data collection on the processing of felony defendants in the State courts of the Nation's 75 most populous counties. The 75 largest counties account for about 37% of the U.S. population and according to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports, about half of all reported serious violent crimes in the United States.

Previously known as the National Pretrial Reporting Program, this data collection series was renamed the State Court Processing Statistics (SCPS) program in 1994 to better reflect the wide range of data elements collected. Approximately 15,000 felony cases filed during the month of May in 40 of the Nation's 75 largest counties are tracked for up to 1 year with data collected on a variety of felony case processing characteristics. These include the types of arrest charges filed against felony defendants; conditions of pretrial release including bail amounts and type of release bonds; and pretrial misconduct including court appearance record, violations of release conditions; and re-arrests committed while on pretrial release. The adjudication outcomes encompassing the dismissal, diversion, guilty plea, and trial conviction rates for felony defendants are also recorded. For those defendants convicted, sentencing data are collected. The SCPS project also obtains data on the defendant's demographic characteristics; criminal justice status at the time of arrest; and prior arrests, convictions, and incarcerations. SCPS collects information from court records, jail information systems, pretrial agencies, prosecutor offices, and State administered criminal history repositories.

The SCPS sample was designed and selected by U.S. Census Bureau staff. It is a 2-stage stratified sample, with 40 of the 75 most populous counties selected at stage one. The 40 counties are divided into four first-stage strata based on overall population figures, number of reported UCR index crimes, and number of felony cases filed in each county. Ten counties are included in the sample with certainty because of their large number of felony court filings. The remaining counties are allocated to the three non-certainty strata based on the variance of felony court filings.

The second-stage sampling (filings) is designed to represent all defendants who had felony cases filed with the court during the month of May. The participating jurisdictions provide data for every felony case filed on selected days during the month of May. Depending on the first-stage stratum in which it had been placed, each jurisdiction provides filing data for 5, 10, or 20 randomly selected business in May. Data from jurisdictions that are not required to provide a full month of filings are weighted to represent the full month.

The SCPS data have been used to generate several BJS reports on felony case processing and pretrial release and misconduct in the Nation's 75 most populous counties. The reports titled "Felony Defendants in Large Urban Counties" can be accessed at the following Internet link <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pubalp2.htm#dluc>>.

The SCPS project is an authoritative or comprehensive source about felony defendants or felony case processing in large urban counties. SCPS is the only data source for information on how many defendants charged with a felony are released on pretrial, how they are released, and the overall rate of pretrial misconduct among these felony defendants. In addition, SCPS provides information on the rates in which defendants

charged with a felony are actually convicted and the relationship between criminal history and pretrial release, conviction, and sentencing.

There are several important limitations to the SCPS project. First, the SCPS project covers case processing in the Nation's 75 most populous counties. It does not have the capacity to make national or county level inferences about felony case processing or pretrial release. Secondly, the current SCPS sampling strategy of selecting only 40 of the Nation's 75 most populous counties and requesting participating SCPS jurisdictions to provide less than a whole month of felony filing data (e.g., 5 or 10 business days) introduces certain levels of sampling error into the data collection process. Lastly, SCPS does not collect several key data elements that potentially play a crucial role in pretrial decision-making. The decision to restrict the SCPS sample to 40 of the Nation's 75 most populous counties, confine felony filing data to less than a whole month, and limit the types of data collected were primarily driven by time and cost restraints and the difficulties inherent in obtaining court case processing data.

Scope of Work

The objectives of this project are to (1) redesign the SCPS data collection instrument to take into account more pertinent information on pretrial release and misconduct; (2) develop sampling methodologies for producing reliable estimates of felony case processing in a core set of the Nation's most populous jurisdictions; (3) develop and test alternative sampling strategies that allow for periodic modular enhancements of SCPS; (4) develop statistical models for assessing the reliability of the proposed sampling frameworks; (5) develop procedures that minimize data collection costs by taking advantage of automated systems of case management, state criminal history depository programs, and administrative jail systems; (6) conduct field tests of revised SCPS data collection instrument; (7) develop methods to encourage participation from pretrial agencies, court personnel, sheriff and jail officials, prosecutors, and state criminal history depository programs in redesigned SCPS; (8) develop methods for ensuring individual confidentiality; and (9) provide an implementation plan for the redesigned SCPS data collection to begin in 2009.

Specifically, the Recipient of the funds will:

1. Develop a detailed timetable for each task in the project. All deliverables are due within 10 months. After the BJS Project Manager has agreed to the timetable, all work must be completed as scheduled.
2. Redesign the SCPS data collection instrument to take into account more pertinent information on pretrial release and misconduct. Although SCPS collects pretrial release and misconduct information, it currently does not obtain data on key pretrial elements including the defendant's education, marital status, current employment, community ties, and drug dependency. In addition, SCPS does not examine the kinds of monitoring offered by pretrial programs and the release protocols of jurisdictions participating in SCPS. The redesign will examine the feasibility of collecting these kinds of more detailed information about the pretrial process. In addition, the redesign will determine whether any information currently being collected by SCPS is extraneous to the project's primary data collection focus and effort.

3. Develop sampling methodologies for producing reliable estimates of felony case processing in a core set of the Nation's most populous jurisdictions. The current SCPS sampling strategy of selecting only 40 of the Nation's 75 most populous counties and requesting participating SCPS jurisdictions to provide less than a whole month of felony filing data (e.g., 5 or 10 business days) introduces certain levels of sampling error into the data collection process. The redesign will examine various strategies for augmenting the sampling design of the Nation's most populous jurisdictions. Included will be ideas examining the efficacy of sampling case processing beyond the 75 most populous counties, obtaining more reliable estimates of case processing in the most populous jurisdictions, and collecting information on a whole month as opposed to a random set of 5 or 10 business days of felony case processing data. The redesign will also discuss whether it's feasible to continue collecting pretrial information from all counties in the SCPS sample or whether pretrial information should be collected from a narrower sample of counties containing detailed pretrial information.
4. Develop and test alternative sampling strategies that allow for periodic modular enhancements of SCPS. The SCPS sampling strategy has remained essentially unchanged since its inception and does not allow for enhancements to augment the current research design. The SCPS redesign should include ideas on how the project could be periodically enhanced to examine various components of felony case processing. Modular enhancements that could be briefly highlighted in the proposal include a discussion of how felony case processing could be examined in less populous jurisdictions, analyzed across similar localities, or investigated in a national sample of urban, suburban or rural counties for certain case types such as violent, drug, or identity theft offenders.
5. Develop statistical models for assessing the reliability of the proposed sampling frameworks. The redesign will include statistical models capable of assessing the reliability of the proposed sampling frameworks. These statistical models and sampling estimates will be made available to the project monitor and be used for project documentation and approval by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
6. Develop procedures that minimize data collection costs by taking advantage of automated systems of case management, State criminal history repository programs, and administrative jail systems. When the SCPS program began in the late 1980s, much of the data collected from the courts, pretrial agencies, and state criminal history programs were not automated. This has changed over time as jurisdictions have become increasingly able to integrate their diverse case management systems, make their case management systems available for online access, and automate their criminal history record systems. The redesign should account for increasing levels of automation and internet accessibility and provide suggestions for using these automated mechanisms to collect data in a more timely, cost effective, and expeditious manner.
7. Conduct field tests of revised SCPS data collection instrument. Nine jurisdictions should be selected to field test the redesigned SCPS data collection instrument. Field tests will assess the feasibility of collecting detailed case processing data from a range of urban, suburban, and rural counties and determine the capacity for collecting more detailed data involving the pretrial process.

8. Develop methods to encourage participation from pretrial agencies, court personnel, sheriff and jail officials, prosecutors, and State criminal history repository programs in the redesigned SCPS. The redesign will develop an action plan to enhance the level of interest and participation in SCPS among pretrial agencies, state court officials, sheriff and jail associations, and criminal history repository programs. The action plan should include strategies on how to enhance the level of exposure that SCPS receives among key professional agencies with an interest in felony case processing including the National Association of Pretrial Agencies, Conference of State Court Administrators, the National Association of Court Managers, the National District Attorneys Association, the American Bar Association, the National Legal Aide and Defender Association, and State Criminal History Repository Agencies.
9. Develop methods for ensuring individual confidentiality. The redesign will suggest mechanisms for ensuring the confidentiality of individuals tracked in the SCPS program.
10. Provide an implementation plan for the redesigned SCPS data collection to begin in 2009. In collaboration with the BJS project manager, an implementation plan for executing the redesigned SCPS in 2009 will be developed. SCPS will be redesigned so that it takes place once every three, rather than two years.

Additional guidance

1. Direct experience in collecting felony case processing data from key state agencies including courts, pretrial agencies, sheriffs' offices, jails, and state criminal history repository programs. Recipient should understand the intricacies involved collecting automated court, pretrial, and criminal history data.
2. In preparing proposals for this solicitation, applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss the extant BJS statistical reports on felony case processing, available on the BJS website at <www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs>.
3. A clear project management structure and plan, project timeline, and reasonable budget approach for development of the SCPS redesign. The project management plan should include the responsibilities and activities of each principal staff member. The budget detail should provide direct linkage to the activities to be performed.

Funding under this competitive grant announcement is contingent on the availability and amount of FY 2008 funding available. BJS anticipates making one award for a 10-month period under this solicitation.

Performance Measures

To assist in fulfilling the Department's responsibilities under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), P.L. 103-62, applicants who receive funding under this solicitation must provide data that measure the results of their work. Performance measures for this solicitation are as follows:

Objective	Performance Measures	Data Grantee Provides
<p>Improve State Court Processing Statistics data collection instrument.</p>	<p>Successfully complete a redesign of the SCPS data collection which addresses its current limitations and yields alternative strategies and options which will serve to broaden the scope of SCPS and augment the sampling design of the nation's most populous jurisdictions.</p> <p>Successfully conduct a pretest of SCPS to assess the feasibility of collecting detailed case processing data from a range of urban, suburban, and rural counties and determine the capacity for collecting more detailed data involving the pretrial process.</p>	<p>Demonstrate that the redesign includes: (1) a robust instrument capable of obtaining essential data elements; (2) sampling methodologies for producing reliable estimates; (3) alternative sampling strategies that allow for periodic modular enhancements of SCPS; (4) statistical models for assessing the reliability of the proposed sampling frameworks; (4) procedures that minimize data collection costs by taking advantage of automated state record systems; and (5) methods for ensuring individual confidentiality.</p> <p>Demonstrate the viability of the redesigned instrument and collection protocol to obtain quality data as indicated by factors such as: minimal number of missing or inconsistent data in data file; minimal post validation follow-up; and 100% response from selected jurisdictions.</p>

How to Apply

DOJ is participating in the e-Government initiative, one of 25 initiatives included in the President's Management Agenda. Part of this initiative -- Grants.gov -- is a "one-stop storefront" that provides a unified process for all customers of Federal grants to find funding opportunities and apply for funding.

Grants.Gov Instructions: Complete instructions can be found at www.grants.gov. If you experience difficulties at any point during this process, please call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at **1-800-518-4726**.

CFDA Number: The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for this solicitation is 16.734, titled "State Court Processing Statistics Redesign," and the funding opportunity number is 2008-BJS-1833.

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. The DUNS number will be used throughout the grant life cycle. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, simple, 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.

Note: Grants.gov does not support the Microsoft Vista Operating System. The PureEdge software used by Grants.gov for forms is not compatible with Vista. Also, Grants.gov cannot yet process Microsoft Word 2007 documents saved in the new default format with the extension ".DOCX." Please ensure the document is saved using "Word 97-2003 Document (*.doc)" format.

Please also note: OJP's Grants Management System (GMS) does not accept executable file types as application attachments. OJP's Grants Management System (GMS) downloads applications from Grants.gov and is the system in which OJP reviews applications and manages awarded grants. These disallowed file types include, but are not limited to, the following extensions: ".com", ".bat", ".exe", ".vbs", ".cfg", ".dat", ".db", ".dbf", ".dll", ".ini", ".log", ".ora", ".sys", and ".zip".

What an Application Must Include

When applying for Federal funding, applicants must provide the following:

Standard Form 424
Program Narrative
Budget and Budget Narrative
Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (*if applicable*)
Other Attachments

- Applicant must complete the online Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), a standard form that most Federal agencies use.

Project and Budget Related Attachments

- The project narrative should describe activities as discussed in the Scope of Work and address the evaluation criteria. The project narrative should contain a detailed timeline for project activities, a description of the survey

- methodology to be used, including defined geographic boundaries, data collection method, data entry, and data documentation procedures.
- The Budget Detail Worksheet may be found through the Internet at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/forms/budget_detail.pdf, OJP Standard Forms & Instructions. The OJP Financial Guide, which governs the administration of funds and contains information on allowable costs, methods of payment, audit requirements, accounting systems, and financial records, is available on the OJP website at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/financialguide/index.htm>. If you have any questions, please contact the OJP Office of the Chief Financial Officer's Customer Service Center at 1-800-458-0786.
 - Applicants that do not have a Federally-negotiated indirect cost rate and wish to establish one, may submit a proposal to their "cognizant" Federal agency. In general, the cognizant Federal agency is the agency that provides the preponderance of direct Federal funding. This can be determined by reviewing an organization's schedule of Federal financial assistance. If DOJ is your cognizant Federal agency, information needed to submit an indirect cost rate proposal can be obtained at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/pdfs/indirect_costs.pdf.

Other Attachments

- **Key staff information.**
Information on key staff includes a staff loading chart, by task and contract year, showing the role and number of hours (per year) committed for proposed staff; identification of proposed key personnel and their qualifications for the significant functions in this project, along with concise descriptions of the duties each will perform under the grant; and an identification by name of all key personnel with decision-making authority.
- **Privacy Certification.**
The Privacy Certificate is a funding recipient's certification of compliance with Federal regulations requiring confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person, which is collected, analyzed, or otherwise used in connection with an OJP-funded research or statistical activity. The funding recipient's Privacy Certificate includes a description of its policies and procedures to be followed to protect identifiable data. A model certificate is located at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/bjsmpc.pdf>.
- **Human Subjects Protection Certification of Compliance.**
BJS requires the funding recipient to submit proper documentation to be used to determine that the research project meets the Federal requirements for human subjects protections set forth in 28 CFR Part 46. A model certificate, describing the necessary information to be provided by the funding recipient, can be accessed at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/hscr.htm>.

- **Assurances and Certifications.**
Applicants are required to submit as an attachment signed copies of these assurances and certifications electronically through Grants.Gov. It is critical that the name, address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of the authorizing official on these online forms are correct. These forms can be obtained on OJP's funding page at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/forms.htm>.

(1) **Assurances.** The applicant must comply with the assurances in order to receive Federal funds under this program. It is the responsibility of the recipient of Federal funds to fully understand and comply with these requirements. Failure to comply may result in withholding of funds, termination of the award, or other sanctions.

(2) **Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace.** This form commits the applicant to comply with the certification requirements under 28 CFR Part 69, "New Restrictions on Lobbying," and 28 CFR Part 67, "A Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and Government-wide Requirements for a Drug-Free Workplace (Grants)."

Selection Criteria

Proposals should describe the plan and implementation strategies outlined in the Scope of Work. Information on staffing levels and qualifications should be included for each task and descriptions of experience relevant to the project. Resumes of the proposed project director and key staff should be submitted with the proposal.

The applicant will be evaluated on the basis of:

1. Program Narrative
Content of the proposal and how it addresses the tasks in the scope of work and scheduled timeline.
2. Project Design and Implementation
Demonstrated knowledge of applied survey research, including survey construction, sample issues, questionnaire issues, content issues, bias issues, as well as the ability to pre-test research findings.
3. Capabilities/Competencies
Demonstrated ability of staff in understanding survey research, including survey design and sample design.
4. Budget
Demonstrated fiscal, management, staff, and organizational capacity to provide sound management for this project. Applicant should include detailed staff resources and other costs by project tasks.

5. Impact/Outcomes and Evaluation

Demonstrated ability to develop research designs for complex surveys.

Review Process

Applications will be reviewed competitively with the final award decision made by the Director of BJS. The applicant will be evaluated based on the requirements provided under the Selection Criteria.

Additional Requirements

- Civil Rights Compliance
- Confidentiality and Human Subjects Protections Regulations
- Anti-Lobbying Act
- Financial and Government Audit Requirements
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance
- DOJ Information Technology Standards
- Single Point of Contact Review
- Non-Supplanting of State or Local Funds
- Criminal Penalty for False Statements
- Compliance with Office of the Comptroller Financial Guide
- Suspension or Termination of Funding

We strongly encourage you to review the information pertaining to these additional requirements prior to submitting your application. Additional information for each can be found at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other_requirements.htm.