

Women's Successful Transition and Reentry into the Community from Prison
Office on Women's Health
Request for Proposals (RFP)

A. How To Submit a Proposal

- Proposals must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time (MT) on **Monday, April 30, 2012**.
- Please submit proposals in Microsoft Word or PDF format to reentry@jsi.com or mail to JSI, ATTN: Megan Hiltner, 1725 Blake Street, Suite 400, Denver, Colorado 80202.
- Do NOT submit proposals to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Regional Offices on Women's Health.
- Please read all instructions prior to submitting your proposal.
- Proposals can be a maximum of 15 pages and should be in 12 point, Times New Roman font.
- Proposals must be signed by an official with the authority to commit the organization to a contractual obligation.
- You will receive confirmation of your submission in three days. If you do not receive a confirmation, please call 1- 877-892-0999.

Please follow all instructions provided to ensure that your proposal is accepted for review

For help with this RFP: Please e-mail: reentry@jsi.com or phone toll-free: 1- 877-892-0999.

B. Funding Available

Funding is available for the planning and implementation of three (3) demonstration projects to enhance reentry programs' existing reentry services with comprehensive, gender-responsive, and trauma-informed approaches that support women's effective transition from prison to the community. Please note that ongoing operations will not be funded through this RFP. Funding is specifically for enhanced activities rather than usual operations.

In addition, process and outcome evaluation activities are a requirement for the awarded demonstration sites along with at least one paper for publication. Technical Assistance will be provided to support the awarded organizations with evaluation activities.

Demonstration sites that are selected for funding will each receive \$25,000 for a planning period of approximately four months (May 21, 2012 – September 28, 2012). After successful completion of the planning period, demonstration sites will each receive an additional \$25,000 per year for two years (October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2013 and October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014).

C. Eligibility

Funding is available to eligible entities located in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the six U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Island Jurisdictions, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Eligible entities may include women-focused or women-only reentry organizations that are transitioning adult females from an incarceration setting back into the community. These organizations can be community and faith-based reentry organizations, programs affiliated with prisons or stand-alone, corrections organizations such as probation and parole, or colleges and universities. Organizations need to have demonstrated a commitment to evidence-based practices and/or outcomes specific to women. Special attention and interest will be given to sites that already have task forces, workgroups, or existing collaborations that are focused on women involved in the criminal justice system.

D. Profile of Funder

The Office on Women's Health (OWH) was established in 1991. OWH is housed in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, within the Office of the Secretary. Its mission is to provide leadership to promote health equity for women and girls through sex/gender-specific approaches. OWH achieves its mission and vision by developing innovative programs, educating health professionals, and motivating behavior change in consumers through the dissemination of health information. OWH is the government's champion and primary agent for women's health issues, working to address inequities in research, health care services and education that have historically placed the health of women at risk. OWH is DHHS's focal point for ensuring that women's health policy, practice, and research are mutually informed and effectively integrated within DHHS. OWH accomplishes this by collaborating with other federal and non-federal partners on behalf of women and girls.

OWH has staff located in Washington, D.C. and a network of Regional Women's Health Coordinators (RWHCs) located in each of the ten federal regions. The RWHCs direct and implement national public health initiatives to promote a greater focus on women's health issues at the regional, state and local levels. The RWHCs advance the mission of the OWH by administering programs that improve the health of women in communities across the country, and by coordinating activities in health care service delivery, research, and public and health professional education. Sensitivity to local, state, and regional needs in women's health is reflected in their work to identify priority health areas, to establish networking relationships, and to implement initiatives addressing regional women's health concerns.

OWH contracted with John Snow, Inc. (JSI) to provide general program support to the Office on Women's Health to manage projects and activities in women's health in the ten federal regions. Therefore, JSI is lead contractor for administration of this RFP.

E. Background and Purpose

Justice-involved women are a marginalized population with complex needs across many service areas, including health care, substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, employment, housing, transportation, and family reunification. Furthermore, women enter the criminal justice system with a host of issues that distinguishes them from incarcerated men; such as the need for gynecologic and obstetrical care, demands of dependent family members, struggles with co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders, manifestations of trauma exposure, and financial problems due to unequal earning power. These complex issues all support the need for gender-responsive practices.

Women also encounter many challenges upon their release from prison. Women cannot reunite with their children without safe housing. They cannot secure safe housing without employment. They cannot maintain employment or child care without addressing trauma and substance abuse issues. Accessing health care is frequently a challenge for justice-involved women.

Reentry programs are a valuable resource for assisting women to overcome these challenges and transition from prison to their community. Reentry programs connect women to housing, health care, substance abuse treatment, employment, and education. They assist women with recovery from trauma. They assist women with reuniting with their children. They also have the ability to prevent recidivism by supporting women in making healthy lifestyle choices and reduce women's risks for HIV, STIs, and hepatitis.

This RFP recognizes the lead role that reentry programs play in fostering successful transitions of women from prison to the community. The purpose of the RFP is to support three (3) reentry programs as demonstration projects to increase their capacity to incorporate or enhance their comprehensive, gender-

specific and trauma-informed practices. This funding will build upon the three selected sites' existing service provision and enhance their ability to better serve their clients.

Please note that ongoing operations will not be funded through this RFP. Funding is for enhanced activities rather than usual operations.

F. Focus Area and Activities To Be Carried Out by Demonstration Projects

By understanding gender differences, reentry programs can focus on organizational policies and practices that maximize the success of their female clients. Furthermore, research suggests that a comprehensive reentry program, with a broad spectrum of collaborative partners is fundamental to a woman's reentry success. This funding is intended to support reentry programs to enhance their program to include the elements of **collaboration**, **gender responsiveness** and **trauma-informed care**. These concepts are described below. See *Section G Suggested Resources* for additional information on these concepts.

Reentry programs have an opportunity to serve as collaborative leaders among the programs and services needed by formerly incarcerated women. By applying the **elements of successful collaboration**, including a shared vision, flexibility, willingness to collaborate, complementary strengths, and agreed upon boundaries, reentry programs can create a comprehensive approach to serving women. Through collaborative efforts reentry programs can also assist their partners with understanding the "pathways perspective" to criminality, which is essential to fostering women's reentry success.¹ The pathways perspective suggests that the circumstances, situations, and experiences that led women to prison need to be addressed in order to understand their risk for reoffending. A common understanding among partners of the pathway perspective will support the collective goal of successful women's reentry.

A second element reentry programs must include when applying for this funding opportunity is **gender responsiveness**. The well-known report by Bloom, Owen, and Covington, *Gender Responsive Strategies: Research, Practice, and Guiding Principles for Women Offenders*, offer six guiding principles for implementing gender-responsive programming for criminal justice-involved women.² The six principles, as outlined by Bloom, Owen, and Covington, include:

- **Gender:** Acknowledge that gender makes a difference.
- **Environment:** Create an environment based on safety, respect, and dignity.
- **Relationships:** Develop policies, practices, and programs that are relational and promote healthy connections to children, family, significant others, and the community.
- **Services and Supervision:** Address the issues of substance abuse, trauma, and mental health, through comprehensive, integrated, culturally relevant services, and appropriate supervision.
- **Economic and Social Status:** Improve women's social/economic conditions by developing their capacity to be self-sufficient.
- **Community:** Establish a system of community supervision and reentry within comprehensive, collaborative services.

The third essential element of effective women's reentry services is **trauma-informed care**. Trauma-informed means that a client is linked to a program that is sensitive to her history of trauma, abuse, and

¹ Bloom, B., Owen, B., & Covington, S. (2005). A Summary of Research, Practice, and Guiding Principles for Women Offenders. The Gender-Responsive Strategies Project: Approach and Findings. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections. Online at <http://nicic.org/Library/020418>

² Bloom, B., Owen, B., Covington, S., & Raeder, M. (2003). *Gender-responsive Strategies: Research, Practice, and Guiding Principles for Women Offenders* (NIC Publication No. 018017). Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections.

substance use. The goals of trauma-informed services are to incorporate knowledge about trauma—prevalence, impact, and recovery—in all aspects of service delivery, be hospitable and engaging for survivors, minimize re-victimization, and facilitate recovery and empowerment.³ A trauma-informed system of care considers the following:

- Trauma is not viewed as a single discrete event but rather as a defining and organizing experience that forms the core of an individual's identity. This new identity is how the individual now defines herself, others, and the world around her.
- A holistic and trauma-focused understanding gives the trauma survivor a structure for organizing and understanding her experience. Instead of asking 'how do I understand this problem or symptom,' ask 'how do I understand this person?'
- The goal of the service system is to return a sense of control and autonomy to the trauma survivor. The service provider's job is to help the trauma survivor master the skills necessary to cope in healthy and constructive ways. Services are strength-based and the emphasis is on identifying the capacities of a woman to survive and put them to better use.
- An open and genuine collaboration between the trauma survivor and the provider is critical. The trauma survivor should choose where, how, and when she will receive services. She decides which services should be delivered first. Trust and safety must be earned and demonstrated over time.⁴

Proposals for this funding opportunity must explain how they intend to enhance their program to adopt these gender-responsive, trauma informed principles into their programs and how they intend to work with their partners to apply these principles.

Activities to be carried out by the three awarded demonstration site include:

- Collaborative planning to further identify and refine the needs in the area of women's reentry to develop capacity to support such a program;
- The design and implementation of an enhanced women's reentry program that incorporates collaboration, gender responsiveness and trauma-informed care;
- The design of and participation in evaluations with sufficient rigor to examine the effectiveness of the reentry program and write at least one paper for publication.

G. Suggested Resources:

Reentry Considerations for Women Offenders Coaching Packet

<http://www.cepp.com/documents/Reentry%20Considerations%20for%20Women.pdf>

Gender-Responsive Strategies for Women Offenders: A Summary of Research, Practice, and Guiding Principles for Women Offenders

<http://static.nicic.gov/Library/020418.pdf>

Women and Addiction: A Trauma-Informed Approach

<http://www.stephaniecovington.com/pdfs/CovingtonSARC5.pdf>

Addressing the Mental Health Needs of Women Offenders

<http://www.centerforgenderandjustice.org/pdf/FinalAddressingtheMentalHealthNeeds.pdf>

³ Harris, M., & Fallot, R. (2001). Using trauma theory to design service systems. *New Directions for Mental Health Services*, 89. Jossey Bass

⁴ Ibid.

The National Center for Trauma-Informed Care

<http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/>

H. Funding Guidelines

Applicants may submit **only one** proposal for this funding opportunity. If an applicant submits more than one proposal, none of the proposals will be reviewed or considered for funding.

I. Funding Notification

This is a competitive process. All proposals will be reviewed by an objective technical review panel. Applicants will be notified by e-mail by May 21, 2012, regarding funding decisions.

J. Payment Process

Awardees will become subcontractors of JSI; therefore, no CFDA number is associated with these funds. The approved proposal will serve as a contract for required deliverables from awardees. Payment will be processed as follows:

- Awardees will receive their award in two payment installments.
- Each payment will be 50% of the total amount awarded.
- The initial payment will be processed, upon receipt and approval of the interim report, which is due on July 31, 2012. The report format will be provided by JSI.
- Payment for subsequent years will follow the same process and be made in two installments during each year.

Please Note: Any modifications to an awardee's proposal must be approved before the proposed project is implemented. Modifications to a proposed project that are not approved in advance may result in nonpayment. To request approval for modification, please contact JSI at reentry@jsi.com.

K. Project Time Frame

The 28-month project period is divided into two parts: the first five-month period will serve as the planning period of the project, the remaining 31 months, years 2 and 3, constitute the period for project implementation.

L. Review Process

Proposals will be reviewed by an objective technical review panel. Successful proposals will be selected based on their relevance to the following criteria:

- Form I. Cover Page (5 points)
 - All requested contact information is included
- Form II. Organizational Background (15 points)
 - Description of organization's mission and history is provided
 - Description of current reentry services is provided

- Form III. Proposed Project Description (35 points)
 - Description of enhanced services is provided
 - Description of proposed project plan is provided
 - Project staff, their role on the project, and their capabilities are described
 - Proposed partners, plan for recruiting partners, and partners' contributions are described
 - Description of logistics for project enhancements is provided
 - Sustainability plan is provided
 - Planned tasks and milestones are identified
 - Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) from partners are included (MOAs are not include in 15 page limit)
- Form IV. Project Evaluation (35 points)
 - Signed agreement to participate in evaluation
 - Description of proposed evaluation plan is provided that includes the evaluation questions to be answered by the project
 - An evaluator is identified and resume is provided
 - Description of evaluation and data collection capacity is provided
 - Signed agreement to produce at least one paper for publication
- Form V. Project Budget (10 points)
 - Budget expenses are detailed in the table provided
 - All itemized expenses are allowable based on the guidelines included on the form
 - Other sources and amounts of funding (if any) are included

JSI reserves the right to request revisions to the budget and/or scope of work of any applicant.

M. Data Disclaimer

It is the responsibility of the awardee to identify proprietary information and request that the information be treated as such. Any additional restrictions on the use or inspection of material contained within the proposal shall be clearly stated in the proposal itself. The privacy policy for JSI is available at <http://www.jsi.com/JSIInternet/privacy.cfm>. The HHS privacy policy is available at <http://www.hhs.gov/Privacy.html>.

N. Proposal Instructions

Complete your proposal using the forms provided:

- Proposals should be signed by an official with the authority to contract on behalf of the organization. For proposals submitted via e-mail, a typed electronic signature with a statement "this typed signature represents an official signature" is acceptable.
- Complete proposals cannot exceed 15 pages in length, including the budget pages. Page limit does not include MOAs.
- Completed proposals must include:
 - Cover Page (included as Form I)
 - Organizational Background (included as Form II)
 - Proposed Project Description (included as Form III)
 - Project Evaluation (included as Form IV)
 - Project Budget (included as Form V)

**Women’s Successful Transition and Reentry into the Community from Prison
Cover Page – Form I**

Contact Information:

DHHS Region: _____

Organization Name: _____

Mailing Address, City, State, Zip: _____

Executive Director: _____

Project Director: _____

Point of Contact for this Proposal : _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Fax Number: _____

Organization’s Employer Identification Number (EIN)/
Tax Exempt Number: _____

**Signature of Official with Contracting Authority: _____

Print Name: _____

**** This is the person with the legal authority to enter into a contractual obligation on behalf of the organization. For proposals submitted via e-mail, a typed electronic signature with a statement “this typed signature represents an official signature” is acceptable.**

Organizational Background – Form II

1. Describe your organization's mission and history. Include information on your organization's capabilities and qualifications to implement the proposed project.
2. Provide a brief description of the current reentry services you provide and identify any women-specific components.

Proposed Project Description – Form III

1. Describe the ways in which you will enhance your program.
2. Describe the proposed project plan and implementation of the enhancements.
3. Describe the proposed project staff, their role on the project and their relevant capabilities.
4. Describe plans for recruiting additional partners.
5. Describe partnering entities that will work with your organization to plan and implement the enhancements.
6. Provide the logistical information for the enhancements. (Proposed location, community setting, dates, etc.).
7. Describe plans to sustain your project.

8. In the table below, provide a timeline for project including major tasks and milestones, and identify responsible parties for all activities required to carry out this project. (Add more rows as needed.)

Task and Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Person Responsible

9. Provide the Memorandum of Agreement(s) for the partners identified.

Project Evaluation – Form IV

1. I agree to participate in an evaluation of this project and submit all required evaluation materials by the dates requested.

Name of Responsible Party

Date

Responsible Party's Phone Number

Responsible Party's Email Address

2. Describe the proposed evaluation plan and include the evaluation questions to be answered by the project.
3. List the person evaluator and provide his/her resume.
4. Describe your program's evaluation and data collection capacity.
5. I agree to produce at least one paper for publication by the dates requested.

Name of Responsible Party

Date

Responsible Party's Phone Number

Responsible Party's Email Address

Project Budget- Form V

Funding will not be provided for the following:

- fundraising activities
- purchase of equipment
- printing
- food
- incentives

1. List how you will use requested funds for this project in the table below.

Item Description	Cost (\$)	Requested Funds	Other Funding Source
Total:			

2. If your budget for the requested funds includes salaries or staff time, please provide a justification.

3. List other sources of funding to support the activity(s) budget, including in-kind support.

Co-Sponsors/Partnerships	Funding	In-Kind	Total Contribution