

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE (BJA)

Fiscal Year 2023 Solicitation Webinar:

BJA's Missing and Unidentified Human Remains (MUHR) Program

March 2, 2023



BJA
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice

Presenters

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Agenda

- **SECTION 1: BJA and OJP Overview**
- **SECTION 2: BJA Fiscal Year 2023 MUHR Program – Solicitation Overview**
- **SECTION 3: How to Apply**
- **SECTION 4: RTI International – New Forensics Training and Technical Assistance Program Introduction**
- **SECTION 5: Questions and Answers Session**



SECTION 1:

OJP AND BJA:

**OVERVIEW
INFORMATION**



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What is the Office of Justice Programs?

- The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) provides grant funding, training, research, and statistics to the criminal justice community.
- OJP is one of three grant-making components of the Department of Justice along with the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

Office of Justice Programs

BJA - Bureau of Justice Assistance

BJS - Bureau of Justice Statistics

NIJ - National Institute of Justice

OVC - Office for Victims of Crime

OJJDP - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

SMART - Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking

U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance

Mission: BJA's mission is to provide leadership and services in grant administration and criminal justice policy development to support state, local, and Tribal justice strategies to achieve safer communities.

BJA works with communities, governments, and nonprofit organizations to reduce crime, recidivism, and unnecessary confinement, and promote a safe and fair criminal justice system.



www.bja.gov





Appointed by President Biden in February 2022, Director Moore leads BJA's programmatic and policy efforts on providing a wide range of resources, including training and technical assistance, to law enforcement, courts, corrections, treatment, reentry, justice information sharing, and community-based partners to address chronic and emerging criminal justice challenges nationwide.

Policy Office

Provides national leadership to criminal justice organizations that partner with BJA to identify effective program models for replication and infuse data-driven, evidence-based strategies into operational models, practices, and programs.

Programs Office

Administers state, local, tribal, and territorial grant programs. It acts as BJA's direct line of communication to states, local jurisdictions, territories, and tribal governments by providing customer-focused grants management support and careful stewardship over federal funds.

Operations Office

Coordinates all communication, formulates and executes the budget, manages contracts, measures grantees' performance, and provides administrative support to BJA.

Public Safety Officer Benefits Office

Provides death and education benefits to survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other public safety officers, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty.

**BJA Director
Karhlton F. Moore**

BJA's Five Major Strategic Focus Areas

Improve public safety through measures which build trust with the community and ensure an effective criminal justice system

Reduction in recidivism and prevention of unnecessary confinement and interactions with the criminal justice system

Integration of evidence-based, research-driven strategies into the day-to-day operations of BJA and the programs BJA administers and supports

Increasing program effectiveness with a renewed emphasis on data analysis, information sharing, and performance management

Ensuring organizational excellence through outstanding administration and oversight of all of BJA's strategic investments

Fund – Invest diverse funding streams to accomplish goals.

Educate – Research, develop, and deliver what works.

Equip – Create tools and products to build capacity and improve outcomes.

Partner – Consult, connect, and convene.

SECTION 2:

MUHR PROGRAM:

**SOLICITATION
OVERVIEW**



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MUHR Program:

Solicitation Overview

Solicitation Posting and Closing Date Information

- **Posting Date:** February 9, 2023
- **Closing Date:** April 18, 2023
- **Grants.gov Deadline:** April 11, 2023, 8:59 pm Eastern
- **Application JustGrants Deadline:** April 18, 2023, 8:59 pm Eastern
- **Weblink:**
<https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/o-bja-2023-171578>



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MUHR Program:

Solicitation Overview

Program Background:

- According to the U.S. Department of Justice Department's, National Institute of Justice's, National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) Program database, over 600,000 individuals go missing in the United States every year.
- In addition, it is estimated that 4,400 unidentified bodies are recovered each year, with approximately 40,000 remaining unidentified at any given time.
- Initiated in Fiscal Year 2022, the MUHR Program provides funds **directly** to eligible entities to improve the reporting, transportation, forensic testing, and identification of missing persons and unidentified human remains in the United States, including migrants – utilizing various forensic disciplines such as anthropology, odontology, and DNA.



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MUHR Program:

Solicitation Overview

Program Background:

- The MUHR Program is authorized under Jennifer's Law that enables the Attorney General to increase state and local capacity through grant awards that improve the reporting of unidentified and missing persons.
- The program augments and complements the existing services available through NIJ's NamUs Program. NamUs is a free, national, centralized repository, and resource center for locating and identifying missing persons, unidentified human remains, and repatriating unclaimed persons.
- As a result, the MUHR Program helps jurisdictions become more self-reliant and self-sufficient in reducing their backlog of missing persons and unidentified human remains cases.



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Eligible Applicants

- States
- Units of local government
- Accredited, publicly funded, Combined DNA Index System (“CODIS”) forensic laboratories
- Medical examiner offices
- Accredited, publicly funded toxicology laboratories
- Accredited, publicly funded crime laboratories
- Publicly funded university forensic anthropology laboratories
- Nonprofit organizations that have working collaborative agreements with State and county forensic offices, including medical examiners, coroners, and justices of the peace, for entry of data into CODIS or NamUs or both.

Note: A state university with an anthropology department, with a forensic tract with labs, would qualify as an eligible applicant under the statutory authority for the MUHR Program, assuming that the applicant also meets all of the other eligibility requirements outlined in the solicitation.



FY 2023 MUHR Program Funding

Approximately \$5,300,000 Available

Category (Purpose Area)	Number of Awards	Dollar Amount for Award	Performance Start Date	Performance Duration (Months)
Purpose Area 1: Statewide Agencies	Up to 3	\$500,000 to \$1,000,000	October 1, 2023	36 months
Purpose Area 2: Counties and/or Units of Local Government	Up to 6	\$100,000 to \$500,000	October 1, 2023	36 months
Purpose Area 3: Services to Assist Small, Rural, and/or Tribal Entities	1	\$1,000,000	October 1, 2023	36 months



Note: If an applicant is requesting funding under multiple Purpose Areas, a separate proposal must be submitted for each Purpose Area to which they are applying.

MUHR Program:

Solicitation Overview

Program Goals, Objectives, and Award History:

- **Goals:** The goals of the MUHR Program are to establish and expand programs to improve the reporting, transportation, processing, and identification of missing persons and unidentified remains, including migrants in the United States.
- **Objectives:** Each applicant must stay within the scope of the Purpose Area for which they are applying (i.e., Statewide Agencies; Counties and/or Units of Local Government; or Services for Small, Rural, and/or Tribal Entities).
- **Application History:** 37 total applications were received last year (PA 1 = 12 apps; PA 2 = 22 apps; PA 3 = 3 apps).
- **Award History:** 6 awards totaling \$4,476,252 were made last year (PA 1 = 2 awards; PA 2 = 3 awards; PA 3 = 1 award).



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MUHR Program: Solicitation Overview

Program Details (Under Purpose Areas 1 and 2)

- **Inventory:** Inventory all missing persons and unidentified human remains cases in their jurisdictions that fall directly under their authority, or those entities that are servicing jurisdictions that have yet to be processed.
- **Report:** Report into systems such as the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and NamUs, as well as notifying the relatives of missing persons/unidentified remains, as applicable.
- **Identify:** Establish a multidisciplinary team comprised of forensic experts, investigators, victim advocates, etc., to establish the best method of identification for each inventoried case.
- **Repatriate Human Remains:** Develop and implement a plan to return human remains to appropriate relatives, as determined by law



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MUHR Program:

Solicitation Overview

Program Details (Under Purpose Area 3)

- **Serves:** Small, rural, and/or tribal entities by funding transportation, testing, and identification for missing persons and unidentified human remains, including migrants. As such, the intent of this purpose area is to ensure that cases in the above jurisdictions receive the critical resources to assist with resolution.
- **Report:** Work with/assist submitting agencies to ensure their jurisdiction's missing persons and unidentified human remains cases are reported into systems such as NCIC and NamUs, as well as notifying the relatives of missing persons/unidentified remains, as applicable.
- **Identify:** Accept cases from small, rural, and/or tribal entities for identification efforts utilizing forensic technologies.
- **Repatriate Human Remains:** Develop and implement a plan to assist submitting agencies with the return of human remains to appropriate relatives.



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MUHR Program: Solicitation Overview

Deliverable Examples (For Purpose Areas 1 and 2, Only)

Inventory Requirements and Report to BJA:

- The inventory must be completed within the first 6 months of the award.
- The inventory must capture (where possible):
 - Number of unidentified human remains/missing persons cases
 - Year the unidentified human remains were recovered/missing person(s) reported missing
 - Number of suspected border crossing cases
 - Number of unresolved unidentified human remains/unclaimed persons/missing persons cases in the applicant's jurisdiction
- Award recipients will have access to up to 25 percent of grant funds during the initial planning phase.



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MUHR Program: Solicitation Overview

Deliverable Examples (For Purpose Area 3, Only)

For Purpose Areas 3, Only:

- Establish successful outreach campaigns to promote the services your agency offers to small, rural, and/or tribal jurisdictions for missing persons and unidentified human remains cases.
- Routinely report the turnaround time and backlog for identification services agencies utilize.



Permissible Use of Funds



Below are examples of permissible uses of funds that the applicant may utilize upon receipt of the grant award. However, other uses of funds may be allowable on an approved case-by-case basis.

- Exhumations of Human Remains
- Salary (full-time, part-time, and overtime) and Benefits for Personnel
- Training (limited)
- Supplies
- Computer Equipment
- Laboratory Supplies
- Transportation
- Processing and Identification
- Forensic Genetic Genealogy DNA Analysis
- Procure State of the Art Multi-modal, Multipurpose Forensic DNA Typing and Analytical Equipment

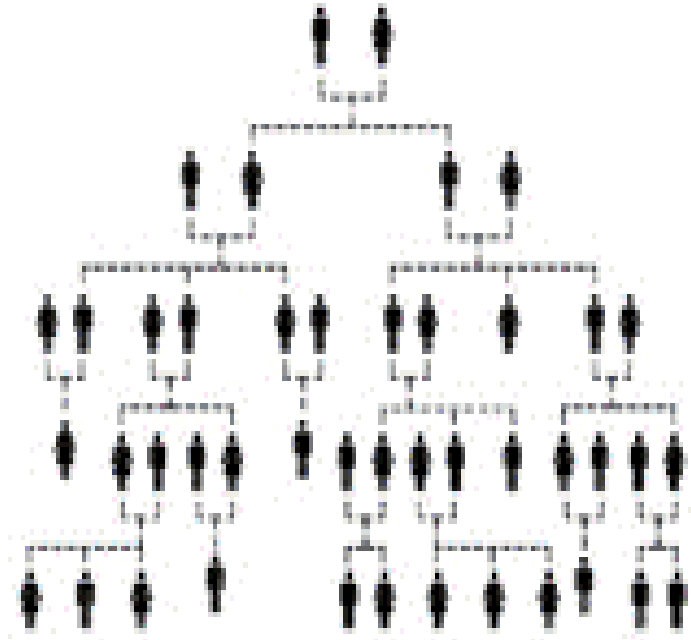
Non-Permissible Use of Funds



- **Supplanting is not permitted.**
- **Construction costs are not permissible.**
- **In general, the requested items must be in accordance with completion of the specific MUHR project and meeting the goals, objectives, and deliverables of the overall MUHR Program.**
- **For example, equipment for enhancing the laboratory's overall capacity, that is not specific solely for this project, is not allowable.**
- **Unmanned Aircraft Systems: The use of BJA grant funds for unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), including unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAV), and all accompanying accessories to support UAS or UAV, is unallowable.**
- **Funeral and/or Burial Costs (after repatriation process).**
- **Expert Witness Personnel Costs.**

Forensic Genetic Genealogy (FGG)

- In cases where DNA profiles from unidentified persons have not resulted in a CODIS association, agencies may use funds for FGG as another means to try and identify the decedent.
- Program activity involving forensic genetic genealogical DNA analysis and searching (FGGS) is subject to the DOJ “Interim Policy on Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching” or to the final policy, when issued.
- DOJ Interim Policy on FGG DNA Analysis and Searching: <https://www.justice.gov/olp/page/file/1204386/download>
- **Note:** FGG analysis cannot be used on any case. DOJ’s Interim Policy specifically states that only unidentified human remains ruled as “homicides” can be subjected to FGG utilizing grant funds.



Family Reference Samples

- For the collection and processing of family reference samples for upload to CODIS (to match and identify missing and unidentified person(s)), the applicant **must submit a letter of support with a relevant law enforcement agency and medical examiner/coroner.**
- Following FBI guidance and requirements, the relative of a missing person must voluntarily submit their DNA sample, per a consent form. Law enforcement must oversee and confirm that the relative is who they say they are via a form of identification.
- The reference sample can only be used for identification purposes. Once and if a match is made, the law enforcement agency overseeing the case must be notified, as well as the supporting medical examiner/coroner.
- FBI Guidance: <https://www.fbi.gov/services/laboratory/biometric-analysis/codis/codis-and-ndis-fact-sheet>

MUHR Program:

Solicitation Overview

Clarifying Information for FY 2023

- **Eligible Applicants:** Entities that meet the Eligible Applicant list should then decide what Purpose Area they will apply for based on their service capabilities and adhering to the goals, objectives, and deliverables for those MUHR Purpose Areas.
- **Purpose Area 3 (Services to Assist Small, Rural, and/or Tribal Entities):** Under this Purpose Area, BJA is seeking to award only one (1) applicant that will be able to provide services to assist small, rural, and/or tribal entities—on a national scale.
- **Requirement to Address Both Unidentified Human Remains and Missing Persons Cases:** It is acceptable for an applicant to propose working only unidentified human remains cases or only missing persons cases (with the provision of a brief explanation and justification in their proposal), if doing both types of cases is not feasible.



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MUHR Program:

Solicitation Overview

Clarifying Information for FY 2023

- **Applying Under Multiple Purpose Areas:** Is allowable but a separate proposal must be submitted for each Purpose Area to which an applicant is applying.
- **Additional Resources:** BJA has included some additional resources from the U.S. Custom and Border Protection (U.S. Border Patrol) and DOJ's Office for Victims of Crime for awareness and potentially assisting with other project components not covered with MUHR funding.
- **Successful Grant Application Examples: Examples of successful applicants under last year's Purpose Areas 1 and 2** are available online to assist the field. Thank you to those grantees for their help! For more information, visit: <https://bj.a.ojp.gov/program/muhr/funding>



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SECTION 3:

MUHR PROGRAM:

**HOW TO APPLY
INFORMATION**



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Agenda

- **Application Submission Process**
- **Application Review Process**
- **Additional Application Components**
- **Merit Selection Criteria**



Application Submission Process



Two-Step Process

- **Step 1:** The applicant must submit by the Grants.gov deadline the required Application for Federal Assistance standard form (SF-424) and a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form when they register in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>
- To register in Grants.gov, the applicant will need to ensure that its System for Award Management (SAM) registration is current.
- **Grants.Gov DUE DATE: April 11, 2023; 8:59 pm EDT**

Application Submission Process



Two-Step Process

- **Step 2:** The applicant must then submit the **full application** including attachments in JustGrants at JustGrants.usdoj.gov. To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline.
- OJP encourages applicants to review, the “How to Apply” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) and the JustGrants website for more information, resources, and training.
- **JustGrants DUE DATE: April 18, 2023; 8:59 pm EDT**

Application Review Process



1. OJP screens applications to ensure they meet the basic minimum requirements prior to conducting the peer review.
2. Applications that meet the basic minimum requirements will be evaluated for technical merit by a peer review panel(s).

Although specific requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all OJP solicitations:

- The application must be submitted by an **eligible type of applicant**.
- The application must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable).
- The application must be **responsive to the scope** of the solicitation.
- The application must include all items necessary to meet the **basic minimum requirements**.

Application Review Process



Basic Minimum Requirements

The following application elements **must** be included in the application to meet the **basic minimum requirements** to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding:

- **Proposal Abstract:** Note, should include information on the estimated number of cases to be addressed under the project. However, if this information is unavailable at the time of the application submission, then the applicant should indicate that the number of cases is pending or to be determined.
- **Proposal Narrative**
- **Budget Web-based Form** (The web-based form includes the budget details and the budget narrative.)

Additional Application Components



Other Common Application Elements

- Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)
- Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable)
- Timeline
- Memorandum of Understanding (if applicable)
- **Letters of Commitment**
- Résumés of Key Personnel
- List of Procurement Contracts (if applicable)
- Organizational Chart
- **Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist (NEPA)**



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist:

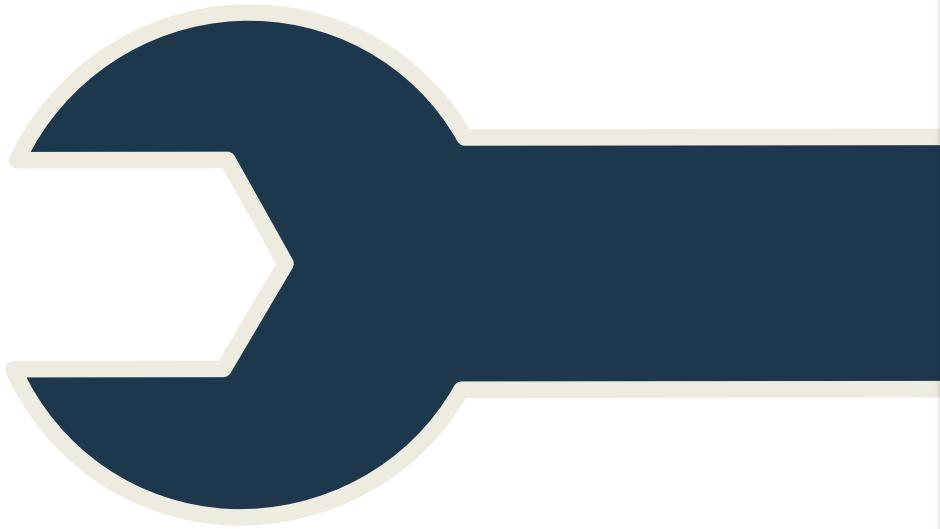
- Each applicant is to submit a BJA Programmatic Cover Sheet and Checklist with its application to assist BJA in assessing the potential environmental impacts of the activities proposed for funding by the applicant.
- The applicant should also submit a Cover Sheet and BJA Programmatic Checklist for any organization identified in the budget worksheet that will receive grant funds through a subaward or procurement contract to perform certain activities.
- Example - The exhumation of human remains will need to be addressed and included in the NEPA Checklist submission.
- See the solicitation for more details, instructions, and links to NEPA materials.

Merit Review Criteria

- **Description of the Issue (15 Percent)** - Evaluate the applicant's understanding of the program/issue to be addressed.
- **Project Design and Implementation (40 Percent)** - Evaluate the adequacy of the proposal, including the goals, objectives, timelines, milestones, and deliverables.
- **Capabilities and Competencies (30 Percent)** - Evaluate the administrative and technical capacity of the applicant to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives.
- **Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (5 Percent)** - Evaluate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements and the plan for collecting the required data.
- **Budget (10 Percent)** - Evaluate for completeness, cost effectiveness, and allowability (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

PLEASE REVIEW THE SOLICITATION FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION.

JustGrants System



OJP has developed several resources to help grantees navigate the JustGrants system.

We encourage all of our grantees take the time to review and leverage the various resources available to use the system and execute basic functions. These resources include videos, job aides, and more on procedures for entity management, award acceptance, and grant modifications.

Training Available:

<https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training-resources/justgrants-training/grants-management-lifecycle>

Subscribe to the JustGrants Newsletter:

<https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/news>

For any questions or technical issues regarding JustGrants please contact the helpdesk at JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov or 833-872-5175.

Contact Information For Solicitation Questions

- For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, contact the OJP Response Center at 800-851-3420, 301-240-6310 (TTY for hearing-impaired callers only), or grants@ncjrs.gov.
- The OJP Response Center operates from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time (ET) Monday–Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET on the solicitation close date.

SECTION 4:

MUHR PROGRAM:

NEW - BJA FORENSICS TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

RTI International



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Forensics Training and Technical Assistance Team (Forensics TTA)



The Who

- Led by RTI International
- Cadre of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)
- Advisory Board

The What

- Assisting BJA grantees in accomplishing strategic goals and objectives across forensic disciplines
- Proactively engaging grantees to monitor progress and develop materials based upon agency needs
- Supporting sustainability through implementation of new and enhancement of existing policies/practices

The How

- National Grantees Meeting
 - On-site and virtual engagements
 - Peer-to-peer connections
 - Online learning (webinars, written briefs, working groups)
 - Social media
-

Coming Soon...

- Follow us on Social Media!
 - *Twitter:* @Forensics_TTA
 - *Facebook:* Forensics TTA
- Forensics TTA Website
- Webinars
- ...and much more!

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SECTION 5:

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
PARTICIPATION!**

**QUESTIONS AND
ANSWERS SESSION**

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