

DNA Capacity Enhancement Program Formula Grant Announcement Fiscal Year 2004 May 18, 2004

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ), a component of the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, is pleased to announce that funding is now available to States (including the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico) and to units of local government through the fiscal year 2004 DNA Capacity Enhancement Program.¹ This program seeks to improve the infrastructure and analysis capacity of existing State and local crime laboratories that conduct DNA analysis so they can process DNA samples efficiently and cost-effectively. These improvements are critical to preventing future DNA backlogs, and to helping the criminal justice system realize the full potential of DNA technology. Please read this announcement carefully for important information on eligibility, funding amounts, and application instructions.

The deadline for applications is June 14, 2004. Applications must be submitted through the Office of Justice Programs' web-based Grants Management System (GMS). Begin the process early by registering at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>.

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¹ The U.S. Territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S Virgin Islands also may be eligible for funding for existing laboratories.

I. DNA Capacity Enhancement Program Appropriations

On January 23, 2004, President Bush signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-199). The Act appropriated \$100 million to the U.S. Department of Justice for a DNA analysis and backlog reduction formula program. Approximately \$28 million of that appropriation is available for fiscal year 2004 formula grants to strengthen crime lab capacity for DNA analysis. The Capacity Enhancement Program is intended to improve the DNA analysis capacity and infrastructure of existing State and local government crime laboratories so they can process DNA samples efficiently and cost-effectively and help prevent future backlogs.

II. Program Description and Eligibility

The DNA Capacity Enhancement Program for fiscal year 2004 provides funding, based on crime statistics (Part I Violent Crimes), to existing State and local government crime laboratories that conduct DNA analysis. The program is designed to:

- **Provide Basic Infrastructure Support.** Some public crime laboratories still need assistance to help them obtain equipment and material to conduct the basic processes of DNA analysis—extraction, quantitation, amplification and analysis—and to help them satisfy Federal quality assurance standards and meet various accreditation requirements.
- **Build Infrastructure through Laboratory Information Management Systems.** Laboratory Information Management Systems, or “LIMS,” are designed to automate evidence handling and casework management, to improve the integrity and speed of evidence handling procedures, and to ensure proper chain of custody. The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that only 10 percent of the public DNA laboratories have LIMS.
- **Provide Automation Tools to Public DNA Laboratories.** To streamline aspects of the DNA analysis procedure that are labor and time-intensive, crime laboratories should have automated systems such as robotic DNA extraction units. Automated DNA analysis systems increase analyst productivity, limit the potential for human error, and reduce the potential for contamination.
- **Provide Support for the Retention and Storage of Forensic Evidence.** Forensic evidence must be stored in a manner that ensures its integrity and maintains its availability throughout criminal investigations and judicial proceedings. Appropriate evidence storage conditions require costly equipment, such as security systems, environmental control systems, ambient temperature monitors, and de-humidifiers. The program will support the improvement of evidence storage capabilities.

A total of \$28,514,323 is available in fiscal year 2004 for the DNA Capacity Enhancement Program. All existing State and local government forensic DNA laboratories are eligible to apply directly to NIJ for fiscal year 2004 funding. NIJ anticipates awarding funds to every eligible applicant who submits an application that meets the specific application requirements (including those concerning use of funds) and satisfies all other applicable requirements, including those that apply generally to NIJ and OJP grants.

III. Expected Results and Outcomes

Applicants are required to assess all aspects of their forensic DNA evidence examination to identify bottlenecks and general inefficiencies that could be alleviated with DNA capacity enhancement funding. **The result of receiving capacity enhancement funding should be a demonstrated improvement over current operations in the average number of days between submission of a sample to a forensic science laboratory and the delivery of test results to the requesting office or agency, and an overall increase in DNA analysis throughput for the laboratory.** Increased efficiency and effectiveness in laboratory evidence storage and DNA processing and information technology and sharing should also be considered when applying for funding and should be developed or enhanced as a result of participation in this program. Recipients of funding under this program will be required to report their results and outcomes to NIJ periodically.

IV. Use of DNA Capacity Enhancement Funds

A. Permissible Uses of Funds

Expenditures from DNA capacity enhancement awards may include the following:

- 1. Laboratory and Computer Equipment.** Under this category, DNA Capacity Enhancement Program funds may be used for upgrading, replacing, and purchasing laboratory equipment, instrumentation, and computer hardware or software for forensic DNA analyses and data management.
- 2. Supplies.** DNA Capacity Enhancement Program funds may be used to acquire laboratory supplies for validation studies and for other expenses directly attributable to validation of new DNA analysis technologies.
- 3. Contractor-Provided Services.** Outsourcing or contracting of forensic DNA services may be allowed: (1) during periods of in-house validation of new DNA technologies or methods, or (2) if efficiency or economy would be increased by outsourcing/contracting certain tasks.
- 4. Renovation.** DNA Capacity Enhancement Program funds may be used for the renovation of facilities that will improve the effectiveness or efficiency of forensic DNA laboratory

operation. For example, benches, cabinets, interior dividing walls, evidence storage rooms, or extraction rooms can be funded when it can be demonstrated that such construction will improve the efficiency of forensic DNA analyses in the laboratory. Funds may also be used for facilities renovation related to DNA analysis, including short-term and long-term evidence storage facilities, amplification rooms, evidence examination and preparation rooms, drying rooms, walk-in freezers, etc.

5. Accreditation and Certification. DNA Capacity Enhancement Program funds may be used, in whole or in part, to assist State and local government DNA laboratories to satisfy, with respect to their DNA operations, the requirements for accreditation and/or certification.

6. Training. Funds may be used for appropriate internal and external training and for appropriate continuing education/training opportunities and/or applicable graduate-level course work. Reasonable travel expenses directly associated with training may be paid in accordance with the provisions of the OJP *Financial Guide* (available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/FinGuide>).

7. Administrative Expenses. Not more than 3 percent of the total amount of a grant awarded under this program may be used for administrative expenses.

B. Uses of Funds that Are Not Permitted

Federal funds for DNA Capacity Enhancement may **not** be used for:

1. Construction.

2. Travel (other than certain travel expenses associated with appropriate training).

3. Personnel and Overtime. Capacity enhancement funds may not be used to hire new staff or to pay salaries for existing staff, including overtime. (Under certain circumstances, as noted above, contractors may be used.)

4. Administrative Expenses that Exceed 3 Percent of the Award Amount.

C. Supplanting Not Allowed

DNA Capacity Enhancement Program funds may not supplant State or local funds. Federal funds must be used to increase the amount of funds that would, in the absence of Federal funds, be made available from State or local sources for DNA capacity enhancement.

V. Fiscal Year 2004 Application Process

A. Due Date for Applications; Use of GMS

Complete proposals must be submitted through the Office of Justice Programs' (OJP) online Grants Management System (GMS) by 9:00 p.m. eastern time on **June 14, 2004**. Extensions to this deadline are not permitted. **NIJ will not accept faxed or mailed proposals**. NIJ reserves the right to reject incomplete applications, those not responsive to the scope of this announcement, or those not complying with format requirements.

Eligible applicants who do not submit an application for the DNA Capacity Enhancement Program by the **June 14, 2004** deadline will **not** receive funds from the fiscal year 2004 program.

Begin the application process early by registering with GMS at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>

B. How to Apply

All applications for DNA Capacity Enhancement Program funding **must** be submitted through OJP's automated Grants Management System at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>

GMS is intended to expedite and streamline the receipt, review, and processing of applications. We will accept your application only through the online GMS applications system. Applicants may call the toll-free GMS Hotline at 1-888-549-9901 to receive technical assistance with the online application process. The GMS Hotline is open Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. eastern time.

All applicants must possess a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number in order to apply for funding using GMS. Please call 1-800-333-0505 to obtain a DUNS number if your agency does not already have one assigned. Please note: A DUNS number may be requested online at <https://eupdate.dnb.com/requestoptions.html>, but the online process can take up to 30 days.

VI. Required Forms and Documents

Those interested in submitting applications in response to this announcement must complete the required application forms and related documents. You will complete some of the forms shown as part of the development of your user profile during the GMS online application process;

others must be attached to your application file. GMS accepts PDF, Word, and Text document files. It does not accept zip or executable files.

To ensure that your application is complete, see NIJ's "Guidelines: How to Submit Applications" <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>.

Proposal Abstract. The proposal abstract is a very important part of the application. When read separately from the rest of the application, the abstract should serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants should concisely describe project goals and objectives, project plans, and methods for achieving the goals. Once an award has been granted, the abstract is computerized and serves as a summary available to all interested parties for the duration of the grant.

Program Narrative. The program narrative must address the project objectives, the expected results, and the implementation approach. The program narrative also should demonstrate, specifically and comprehensively, how the requested funds will, with respect to DNA analysis, improve laboratory efficiency and productivity *over current operations*. Include in your narrative the current length of time it takes to analyze a forensic DNA sample from submission to delivery of forensic DNA test results. As part of the program narrative, units of local government must certify the proportion of the State's total number of Part I violent crimes they investigated during 2002. The program narrative section of your proposal must not exceed 10 double-spaced pages, no matter the amount of funding. (Tables, charts, figures, appendices, and government forms do not count toward the page limit.)

VII. Additional Requirements and Information

National Environmental Policy Act Requirement. All award recipients must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (Public Law 91-190, codified at 42 U.S.C. § 4321 *et seq.*). To ensure NEPA compliance, NIJ may require some award recipients to submit additional information. An environmental assessment may be required.

Record Maintenance and Access. Each State or unit of local government that receives funding under this program must maintain adequate records relating to the receipt and use of the grant amount. The Attorney General and the Comptroller General of the United States (or designees thereof) will have access to these records for audit and examination purposes.

Reporting Requirement. Each State or unit of local government that receives a fiscal year 2004 DNA capacity enhancement grant must submit a narrative report within 180 days of the end of the award period. The report must include a summary and assessment of the program carried out

with the fiscal year 2004 grant, and shall cite the average number of days between submission of a DNA sample to a forensic science laboratory and delivery of test results to a requesting office or agency, as well as improvements in the laboratory's information management systems, evidence storage and processing, and general throughput capacity for DNA analysis.

These three requirements supplement the general OJP grant administration and reporting requirements. For details, see the OJP Office of the Comptroller's "Post Award Instructions" at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/oc/postaward/> and the OJP *Financial Guide* at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/FinGuide>.

Performance Measures. To ensure compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act (Public Law 103-62), this announcement notifies applicants that program performance is measured by the number of forensic laboratories with improved analytical and technological capabilities with respect to DNA. Award recipients will be required to collect and report data relevant to this measure.

Funds May Not Be Used to Lobby. Award recipients may not use any Federal funds, either directly or indirectly, in support of the enactment, repeal, modification, or adoption of any law, regulation, or policy, at any level of government, without the express prior written approval of OJP. For more information, see "NIJ Guidelines for Submitting Applications" (available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding.htm>) and the OJP *Financial Guide*.

Financial Audits. Applicant agencies that expend \$500,000 or more in Federal funds (from all sources including pass-through awards) during a fiscal year will be required to submit organization-wide audit reports. Audits must be performed in accordance with Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133. For more information, see chapter 19 of the OJP *Financial Guide*.

Award Period. In general, NIJ will limit its grants under this program to a maximum period of 18 months after receipt of the award.

Guidance and Information. Applicants who want additional guidance and information may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 1-800-421-6770. Center staff can provide assistance or refer applicants to an appropriate NIJ professional. Applicants who have questions about GMS or need technical assistance with applying online can contact the GMS Hotline at 1-888-549-9901, Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. eastern time (except Federal holidays).

If you would like to speak with someone at NIJ about this announcement, please call Program Manager John Behun at 202-616-9794 or Thurston Bryant at 202-514-8082.

VIII. Estimated Funding Amounts

In general, DNA capacity enhancement funds will be awarded based upon the number of Part I violent crimes reported to the FBI for 2002, the most current year for which such data is available. The number of qualifying State and local applicants also will affect grant amounts.

To help ensure that crime laboratories in smaller States receive a meaningful amount of these funds, a minimum of one-quarter of a percent (0.25 %) of the total funds available for fiscal year 2004 will be allocated for awards to the government crime laboratories within each State, including laboratories operated at the State and local levels. The additional amount, if any, to be allocated for awards to government crime laboratories within a particular State will be determined by the number of Part I violent crimes in the State relative to the national total of reported Part I violent crimes.²

Units of local government with existing DNA laboratories may apply directly to NIJ for a portion of the funds allocated for awards within their State. Units of local government must certify the proportion of the State's total number of Part I violent crimes they investigated during 2002. These figures will be used to allocate funds among the eligible crime laboratories within a particular State.

The aggregate amounts NIJ expects to award to eligible government crime laboratories within each State are as follows:

² Any awards to American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S Virgin Islands will be determined by a different method.

STATE	Estimated Aggregate Amount for State and Local Crime Labs
Total Funding	\$28,514,323
Alabama	\$390,344
Alaska	\$71,034
Arizona	\$590,891
Arkansas	\$225,244
California	\$4,081,225
Colorado	\$311,045
Connecticut	\$210,869
Delaware	\$94,712
District of Columbia	\$182,569
Florida	\$2,520,968
Georgia	\$769,112
Hawaii	\$71,286
Idaho	\$71,286
Illinois	\$1,531,801
Indiana	\$430,884
Iowa	\$164,277
Kansas	\$200,332
Kentucky	\$223,619

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STATE	Estimated Aggregate Amount for State and Local Crime Labs
Louisiana	\$581,471
Maine	\$71,286
Maryland	\$822,853
Massachusetts	\$609,810
Michigan	\$1,063,569
Minnesota	\$262,984
Mississippi	\$193,066
Missouri	\$598,451
Montana	\$71,286
Nebraska	\$106,306
Nevada	\$271,366
New Hampshire	\$71,286
New Jersey	\$630,002
New Mexico	\$268,683
New York	\$1,861,138
North Carolina	\$766,116
North Dakota	\$71,286
Ohio	\$785,897
Oklahoma	\$344,437
Oregon	\$201,684
Pennsylvania	\$970,972
Rhode Island	\$71,286
South Carolina	\$661,201
South Dakota	\$71,286
Tennessee	\$813,981
Texas	\$2,468,030
Utah	\$107,481
Vermont	\$71,286
Virginia	\$416,293
Washington	\$410,575
West Virginia	\$82,667
Wisconsin	\$239,678
Wyoming	\$71,286
Puerto Rico	\$263,826