

## State UCR Programs, NCS-X

ERICA SMITH: We'll get started. And then, New Mexico, if you guys are the only ones on the line, then it's a private call.

CLARISSA ROMERO: Okay.

ERICA SMITH: Hi. This is Erica Smith from the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Did someone just join the call?

KRISTEN MCCLURE: Yes. This is Kristen from Alaska.

ERICA SMITH: Hi, Kristen. How are you?

KRISTEN MCCLURE: I'm good. How are you doing?

ERICA SMITH: Good. Well, we have a couple of State Programs on the line right now. We weren't sure how--there's--only four were eligible for this particular solicitation. We weren't sure how many folks will be able to make this call or not. So, I'm going to go ahead and get us started and that way, we can, kind of, keep ourselves on time. I'm going to ask folks to introduce themselves who are on the line really quickly. And we'll try to handle introductions pretty fast, and then we'll lunge right into the Q and A session for the solicitation. So, just to verify, you're on a teleconference with the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the FBI CJIS Division, and the NCS-X Implementation Team to talk about the current open funding opportunity through NCS-X or State UCR Programs to build or enhance the NIBRS Program. My name is Erica Smith. I am the Law Enforcer--or the Law Enforcement Incident-Based Statistics Unit Chief at BJS. My unit manages the National Crime Statistics Exchange Project. We have a number of other staff, folks on the line as well. Alexia Cooper who works--and she is the NCS-X TA and other Grant Component Program Manager. Essentially, without Alexia, this program can't function. So, you're going to know a lot about her if you become a grantee. And then, Kimberly Martin who's also a Grant Manager at BJS and works really heavily on the NCS-X Program and does a lot of analytics with NIBRS data. She's also on the line. RTI, if I could turn it over to you guys to introduce yourselves really quickly. RT--the staff from RTI are part of the NCS-X Implementation Team and they support a lot of the technical assistance and implementation efforts that BJS and CJIS are engaged in. So, RTI, if I can turn it over to you guys.

KAREN LISSY: Hi.

BRIAN NYGARD: Yeah. Hi, everybody. Go ahead.

KAREN LISSY: I'm going to say this is Karen Lissy from RTI. And I'm again one of the team members, but we have people calling in from a couple different places. So, I'm going to let--I believe that was Brian who was chiming in, speak a little bit.

BRIAN NYGARD: Yeah. This is Brian Nygard from RTI. And I think we got a few other folks as well.

MARK POPE: Hi. This is Mark Pope with RTI.

KAREN LISSY: And I think that must be everyone from RTI.

ERICA SMITH: I--Michelle is signed in, but her microphone is muted. So, I will just mention Michelle Casper also from RTI. And Dave, I think I forgot to introduce you because you're not showing up by name. So, Dave Roberts is also on the line. He is with IACP, but he is for better or for worse for him, detailed over to BJS to work on the NCS-X Project. And he is also been able to join us this afternoon. Is there anyone else from the team on the line that I--that I am missing right now?

DAVE ROBERTS: Betsy Self from IACP as well. This is Dave Roberts by the way. Betsy Self is from IACP is also on the line.

ERICA SMITH: Well, thank you very much. And Betsy is not feeling well, so she's probably just going to listen in the background right now. And then, Betsy Myers at CJIS, do you want to introduce yourself? And then, anyone else who might have joined from CJIS as well?

BETSY MYERS: Sure thing. Thank you, Erica. This is Betsy Myers. I'm with the Crime Data Modernization Team at the FBI CJIS Division supporting the UCR Program. I'm here with some folks from our finance area. And we'll let them introduce themselves as well.

LISA HALFPENNY: Lisa Halfpenny.

CARLA ABEL: Carla Abel.

BETSY MYERS: [INDISTINCT] she wasn't able to be in this meeting today, but she will be probably in future meetings, so.

ERICA SMITH: Great. Thank you guys very much. I appreciate it. And now, to our State UCR Program folks. So, I stopped asking who had joined us at a certain point, but I heard New Mexico and Alaska. How about we start with New Mexico? You want to--if you could introduce yourselves and let us know who's in the room with you.

CLARISSA ROMERO: Hi. You have Clarissa Romero, Program Coordinator for New Mexico. Also we have Regina Chacon, and Megan Foster, and John Rivera.

ERICA SMITH: Great. Welcome. Thank you guys very much.

CLARISSA ROMERO: You're welcome.

ERICA SMITH: And Alaska?

KRISTEN MCCLURE: Hi. This is Kristen McClure. I'm with the State Program in Alaska. I work with Lisa Parrington. But unfortunately she is not with us today. She's actually out of the country. So, I'm here taking notes for her.

ERICA SMITH: Oh, all right. Well, I hope she's somewhere exciting.

KRISTEN MCCLURE: She's in Scotland.

ERICA SMITH: Were there any others--oh, what's that?

KRISTEN MCCLURE: She's in Scotland.

ERICA SMITH: Oh, well, that's pretty good. Are there any other State Program folks who were able to join us? Arizona or Mississippi?

CLARISSA ROMERO: Not Arizona or Mississippi, but from New Mexico, you have Sheryl James and Sylvia Cerna. We're also with the New Mexico Department of Public Safety. We're with the Grants Management Bureau.

ERICA SMITH: Oh, great. Sorry about that. Okay. Well, we got a couple of you guys on the line, just a couple of the different States that are eligible. So, really this is a forum for you guys to ask us any questions that you might have about the current solicitation. Hopefully, you've had a chance to take a look at it at least. We don't--I believe we only have this one open for forty-five days as opposed to the sixty that we would rather have provided that extra time. But we--can we talk specifically about any of the components of the solicitation that you might have questions about. And just take it from there. I think in general, the solicitation looks very similar to how it looked over the past couple of years and it allows for States to apply for funding to implement or expand a NIBRS Program as a State UCR Program level. And then, it also allows for States to take on the responsibility of determining the readiness of the sample agencies, the NCS-X sample agencies within your state, and to provide support to those local agencies at some point in the application process. And we are also asking that if you're going to provide any of that pass-through support that you provide some specific budget indicators in your application showing what you're going to do to support the sample agencies and how it ties back to enabling them to become NIBRS reporters at the end of the project. I think that that is probably a good enough introduction. I think we've had a lot of conversations with you all over the course of the last, at least, six months. So, with that, I'm going to turn it over to you guys to ask any questions that you might have and hopefully we'll have some answers for you.

CLARISSA ROMERO: [INDISTINCT] this is a plan for sustainability after [INDISTINCT]

ERICA SMITH: What was that? I heard something about sustainability, but I didn't catch if that was a question or if you guys were asking each other about that.

CLARISSA ROMERO: This is New Mexico Department of Public Safety and the Grants Bureau. And we're kind of wondering, so the applications are strongly encouraged to include a plan to support the implementation. And is that--is that, sort of, like a sustainability past the period of the grant? Is that just for or, you know, is for...

ERICA SMITH: Do you--it might be easier for me to ask this, do you have a specific location in the solicitation that I might be able to reference? I think I can respond otherwise if you don't know, but...

CLARISSA ROMERO: Yeah, page eight.

ERICA SMITH: Okay. It's [INDISTINCT] that's all.

CLARISSA ROMERO: The last--it's the last paragraph under the page for questions and I'm just--I'm just curious if that's something that's--if--what you're looking for.

ERICA SMITH: So, at the last little blurb there at the bottom of page eight refer specifically to how a state would plan to implement incident based reporting across the NCS-X sample local law enforcement agencies in your State. So, I can't--I apologize, but I can't remember the total number of sample agencies in New Mexico, but you've got, like, two or three large agencies, and then I want to say, like, five or six of what we call smaller agencies, the under 750 sworn officers. So, this would be--this is a statement encouraging you to work with those locals to figure out what it would take to get them to report incident based data to your NIBRS Program. And that refers to [INDISTINCT], if you go a little bit further down, I believe, yes, in the solicitation on page 10, there's a discussion about providing funding and support to local law enforcement agencies. This is where we discuss the readiness assessments with those local agencies. The types--a little bit about the technical assistance that the NCS-X Implementation Team can provide in conducting those assessments and a little bit about how you can go about getting assistance from the implementation team. So, that's a reference--so, the reference on page eight is really about how the state will determine how to get those agencies onboard. For you guys in New Mexico, it's--my recollection that you guys are thinking about coming in for a planning grant as opposed to an implementation grant, is that correct?

JOHN RIVERA: Yes.

CLARISSA ROMERO: Yes, that is correct.

ERICA SMITH: I mean, obviously, you're not held to anything at this point, but--so, in the planning phase, it may be that you want to essentially not say much about the expansion among the local agencies. Because if you're going to take the 12 months of the planning grants to determine what all of the staffing and technical needs that you have at the State Program Level are and how you're going to implement your own IBR standard and technical specification and sort of go down that path. You probably want to hold off on a lot of planning for expansion among the local agencies in the State just

now. We've done readiness assessments through the NCS-X Implementation Team with the largest agencies in New Mexico. And so, you're really talking about planning for those smaller agencies and what we can do--assuming you apply and everything works out and you become a planning grantee, then we can work with you during the course of that year and anyone that you might bring on to the project to determine how to do some of that outreach with the sample agencies. So, I think as long as you include in your application that that's a function you want to take on, and it would be part of the plan, and that you would work with us to determine how best to do that, I think that will probably suffice, so that it's clear that you understand that we eventually want to get to the point where you have--you have a State Program that can take all these data in and that you're going to--you'll eventually have all of the sample agencies in the state onboard reporting incident based data to you once you're certified.

DAVE ROBERTS: And Erica, there are five other agencies beyond the Albuquerque Police Department that are part of the sample in New Mexico.

ERICA SMITH: Okay, great. Thanks, Dave. Did that help answer your question? Was there another reference to supporting implementation that was different from the one on page eight?

CLARISSA ROMERO: No, that was it. Thank you very much for your answer.

ERICA SMITH: Sure, absolutely. And Kristen, I'm assuming that if you're sitting in for Lisa, I'm--or not assuming, but I'm wondering do you have any specific questions or were you really just sort of on tap to take notes and write down anything that comes up during the call?

KRISTEN MCCLURE: It's definitely the latter. Lisa is definitely lead on the grant writing for the State. So, I--yeah, I'm just sort of here just to take notes and answer any questions that--if they came up.

ERICA SMITH: Okay.

ALEXIA COOPER: Well, I--this is Alexia. I know we've talked to Lisa in the past about the upcoming solicitation, but if something comes up between now and when it's due, we will do our best, just let us know. We can get on a call with you guys and talk through if there is any follow-up after this call.

KRISTEN MCCLURE: Great. I'm sure when she returns next week, I know she's going to be working on this. So, that's good to know that she can--she can reach out with any questions.

ALEXIA COOPER: And that's next week, too...

ERICA SMITH: Yeah. And we put the...

ALEXIA COOPER: ...for everybody.

ERICA SMITH: Yeah, I was going to say, we put this out as a competitive solicitation, but honestly, the competition is not with the people who apply. It's really just--for lack of a better way of saying it, you're just competing with yourself, you know. It's essentially to make sure that you hit on all of the relevant required components of the solicitation. And as long as we get there, and we--you know, we maintain the ability through this process and the fact that it's a cooperative agreement and not a grant that through the cooperative agreement mechanism, that we can negotiate project plans over time, so that if the landscape changes within your State or if something occurs programmatically that impacts what's going on in the State, we have the opportunity to work those things out together in a collaborative fashion.

In terms of the requirements of the grants, I guess, to make sure that this is really clear, the solicitation lays out--I'm looking for the page number right now, where it starts. The solicitation lays out starting on page 21, what an application should include and this--that's really an--the heart of the response in the sense that it's going to tell you what are the main areas to hit. So, it's going to ask you for the financial documentation, the SF-424. That's a separate document. And then, the program acts--the project abstract, those are required elements. And then, under the program narrative starting on page 23 is where the meat of the project plan that you're putting together and that we're going to be doing most of the evaluation on, that's really where I want you to focus. So, the--again the program narrative information begins on page 23 and the components of the program narrative are a statement of the problem and it lays out these five items that we're asking you to--so, you're going to be evaluated on essentially during the peer review process.

The second component of the narrative is the project design and implementation and it lays out four items there on which those applications will be evaluated.

The third component are capabilities and competencies, and then again, those criteria there.

A number of--the fourth component is the plan for collecting performance measures and we lay out a number of items that we would ask you to focus on how you would ensure you keep track of those things during the course of the project.

It looks like a lot there. And if you have any questions about that list, let me know because they--these were not intended to be--these were not intended to be items that were going to make a lot of work for you. They were going to be items that were just in the normal course. And then, we ask you to provide budget information. And the better you--the better you can label these things in your program narrative, the better off you are. So, if you say in your program narrative, you know, the header of the Statement of the Problem or Project Design and Implementation, that's going to allow us to key in very quickly on where that information is contained and how we can evaluate it based on the criteria that are in the solicitation.

We have noticed in the--in the last two rounds of this in the FY '15 and '16 that it was sometimes difficult to follow along in the applications and find all of that information. So, the better you can label it and really hit on those points and ensure that you are addressing these evaluation criteria, the better off we are in being able to evaluate it and determine a path forward in terms of negotiating any changes to the project plan or to the budget. The other thing just that...

SPEAKER 1: I have...

ERICA SMITH: Oh, go ahead. Sorry.

SPEAKER 1: I just have a quick question. So, with the planning for the category when planning awards for one year, what is the cap on those?

ERICA SMITH: So, we actually have not imposed the cap for any of the--for any of the NCS-X grants. I would say that I can't remember the average--the mean amount of funding that we provided out for planning grants, but it's been in the range of between \$200,000 and \$350,000. And that has been--and Alexia, jump in here if I'm forgetting anything or getting any of these wrong, but some of the categories of items that we've covered under planning grants have been to bring onboard contract staff, someone like a business analyst or a tech--a--like a technical specialist who can help you determine what the technical needs are at the State Program Level, a business analyst to look at business process, and human resource issues, and how you can best establish the State Program. There's been a little bit of, like, analysis that was funded in terms of, like, looking at current loads and--current crime data submissions and how that will change under an Incident-Based Reporting Program. Alexia, can you think of what's our--have I hit on the bigger categories or can you think of anything else that planning folks have requested in the past?

ALEXIA COOPER: Generally, that's the majority of what most planning folks have asked for. Given where we are at this point, it would not be unreasonable if a planning grant had agencies that were part of the sample but had not had a readiness assessment done, but were interested in applying for funding, then you could also ask for funds to conduct readiness assessments with agencies that hadn't had one done. I don't know if that's something that would be necessarily something you'd want to do for your agency, but it is the kind of thing at this point that would be not unreasonable depending on where--you know, how you felt things were sitting. But that's the majority of the kinds of things. And the one thing I just want to add to that is that, you know, when you're thinking through how to prepare these, we know that in some of these cases, you're not necessarily going to know who exactly are going to have working on the project. For example, if you're doing a planning grant and you think you might want to hire someone, you may not be able to tell us, "We are going to hire, you know, John Foster from this company for this amount of money per hour." What we are going to ask you guys to do is find a reasonable way to estimate what that will be and describe how you will go about acquiring that assistance and what kind of capabilities and competencies you will expect the person you're going to hire to have. So, for example,

if your State has a standard hiring contract to get IT Staff, and you know you want to hire an IT Specialist to help provide, you know, some sort of insight, you could provide us with the information about, this is the standard amount for an IT person of this type, and these are the minimum requirements we're going to expect that person to fulfill, and these are the tasks they'll be responsible for, things like that. That's what we expect when we say capabilities and competencies for people you may not know who they're going to be. We're going to want you to tell us how you're going to get them and what requirements they're going to have to work for you.

SPEAKER 1: That's very helpful. Thank you.

ERICA SMITH: And I think we've talked about this in the past with some of you as well, but to ensure that the major components of the project plan center around those tasks that are required to automate this process. So, it really is--you know, some of-- obviously, staff are required for that process, so don't be con--well, I mean, think specifically about the type of staff that you might need to conduct these activities and how they are essential to that process. And then, also, how you can message out what is going on at the state level about how you're trying to change the Crime Reporting Process in the State and get that information out, so that agencies are ready and able to participate in the--once you're finished. That can be part of the plan that you develop through this process. So, on the backend for the actual implementation plan, like, once you've gone through that one year planning process and you provide that blueprint to actually implement, there may be components of the full implementation that we are not able to fund based on what the restrictions on the funding source are, but we can, as we--as you move through that one year planning phase, we can be supplying that information to you and we'll be having monthly phone calls. I guess, I'm assuming that you become a grantee, right? We will be having these monthly phone calls to discuss how that plan would--or how those components would work, and what they are, and how we can support them or not support them in any kinds of changes that you might need to make to the implementation strategy based on the availability of funds.

So, there are things--there are number of items in this solicitation, you know, as we laid out what we're trying to accomplish and what we're asking you to focus on at the State Program for the application process. There are a few things if you're talking about making a planning application, there are things that you can discuss in the application that essentially say we're going to--we're going to handle this over the course of the year. You don't have to have costed that out and know all those specifics right now.

Do you all have any--are there any other questions about the solicitation, anything about the budget, or any additional staffing considerations beyond what was just discussed?

KRISTEN MCCLURE: Hi. This is Kristen from Alaska. I understood that there was no cap on the planning grant. And am I understanding correctly that there is also not a cap on the implantation grant as well?

ERICA SMITH: Correct. We have not imposed a cap and there's no match requirement at this point either.

KRISTEN MCCLURE: Okay. Thank you.

ERICA SMITH: Sure. I would--I would say also that we have a number of resources that we have developed over the course of this project that you might find useful I think. I think all of you have been provided some of--links to some of those documents in the past, but we've got state level concept of operations, planning documents, and out--how to outline an implementation plan, if you're at that point. Presented in--we've presented information on some of the key critical questions to ask when costing out your strategies at the State and the local agency level. We have a state level playbook for implementing an incident based reporting system [INDISTINCT] in the State. A number of these kinds how to--we have a readiness assessment toolkit, you know, outline how you go about conducting a readiness assessment with the local agency including draft agendas, and, you know, the step-by-step how to do the outreach and who to ask to attend the meetings at the local agency level. We have--the majority of those documents are available online either at the BJS website, NCS-X website, or the IACP NCS-X website. They can be referenced online. I know we're revamping the resources that are available through the BJS site. And those all should be available, I would say by the middle of next week at the latest. But we also can send anything out to you all via email if for some reason you are not able to find it online. And you can either email us directly for those of you that has all of our--I think most of you have contacted either BJS or CJIS or within the implementation team to do that outreach. But you can also request it via the at BJS website that's referenced in the solicitation as well.

DAVE ROBERTS: Erica, if I can jump in for just one second. This is Dave Roberts. One of the other things that I think you can also plan to address in your planning efforts is technical assistance, so if you need technical assistance above and beyond whatever contractor you're going to bring onboard to help you, we can provide some of that, we, the implantation team can provide some of that technical assistance working with you and even your agencies and the FBI is also going to have some technical, some, you know, some very focused implementation technical assistance that will be available. And, of course, the FBI has training that can be made available and so that's part of when you're contemplating what all you're going to cover in your planning project. Just be aware of that. And those are other resources that can--that are available to you above and beyond whatever activities and specific project deliverable you're going to fund in this effort, so I just want to make sure you were aware that that was available, too.

ERICA SMITH: Thanks, Dave. That's a good addition. Well, do we have any more questions specific to the solicitation? Okay. Well, I think that we will end the call then and just with the reminder that...

ALEXIA COOPER: One sec.

ERICA SMITH: What's that?

ALEXIA COOPER: Hey, Erica, one sec. I just want go over a few logistic things.

ERICA SMITH: Of course.

ALEXIA COOPER: I don't know if you guys has ever applied for OJP grants before. I know that both States get Byrne JAG and some other things, but from a logistics standpoint, I would highly recommend if you even think obviously, we want you guys to apply, we look forward to your applications, and if you guys even think you're going to, we would recommend that you make sure to get confirmation that you have an account set up with grants.gov, and that you are able to, you know, who's the access point that you have active log-ins and all of that well before the deadline. Some of the process can take a couple of days, so if you need to get something set up, I would recommend doing it now rather than waiting.

There is always the truism whenever things go to the last minute for some reason, the system stopped working properly, and then everything seems to become a problem. And we don't want that to happen to you guys. Particularly this year, we will have--OJP will have a lot of grants closing around the same timeframes. And so, we don't want you guys to have any troubles or difficulties with submitting your application.

I will also say that if by chance you have issues submitting your application and it's getting close to the deadline, there is a help number associated with grants.gov. Please call it and make sure you document that you're having system problems. They will give you a case number and the like, and we can actually track that case number and those log-in attempts. So, if by chance you miss the deadline because of system issues, we can actually work around that if you documented through that case number and things that you were attempting to submit something. If you don't document it, but just tell us after the fact that you had those issues, we have to go by what's in the system, and if we can't find some evidence of that, we won't be able to accept an application.

There's a lot of things we can work around in terms of application of what's written, you know, if we need clarification on something you've written, we can reach out, but if you don't get the application in on time, and we can't review what you've submitted, we--that's the one thing we have absolutely no leeway with. So, I would highly recommend that you guys make sure that you have the access to that, and that you have what worked out, who is responsible for submitting that kind of information, so if you need to get an account, you can.

The other thing I would highly recommend is that, you know, we really do want to work with you guys, I think that that's pretty clear, because we're all very excited about this project. Both BJS, the FBI, and the implementation team want you guys to be successful. So, if you do have questions or concern anytime between now and submitting your application, please reach out to somebody on the team. We all talk to each other all the time, and so pretty much there's no wrong answer reaching out. We'll

make sure your question gets to the right people who can answer it. And we don't want you guys to feel like you're being unsupported in this process. So, if you have any questions after this call, please feel free to reach out to us at any time either via phone or email. We will get back to you as quickly as we can and work with you to resolve any questions or concerns you have as quickly as we can. That's all, thanks.

ERICA SMITH: Thanks, Alexia. Okay. Well, barring any additional questions and, of course, reiterating that you can reach out to any of us at any time, I think we will end the call. Thank you, guys, very much for calling in and for considering this solicitation. And hopefully, we will see an application from you by June 30th which is the close date. We appreciate it and feel free, like I said to reach out if you--if you have any additional concerns later on.

SPEAKER 2: Well, thank you.

ERICA SMITH: Thanks, everyone. Bye-bye. Thank you.