



**BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE  
NATIONAL TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
Technical Assistance to  
The Bureau of Justice Assistance  
Issued: April 23, 2015**

**I. BACKGROUND**

Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) National Training and Technical Assistance Center (NTTAC) will commission a white paper to examine the current use of risk assessment at sentencing at the state and local judiciary levels. Although case studies do exist that describe some sites' use of such information, BJA seeks a more comprehensive understanding of existing practices.

The selected provider will have demonstrated knowledge, skills, and abilities to produce a comprehensive review of risk assessment use in state and local judicial decisionmaking, in addition to the expertise necessary to translate the information gathered. The applicant should propose strategies to address ideas discussed above, and BJA NTTAC encourages the applicant to propose additional ideas to support the intent of the white paper.

The white paper will increase BJA's understanding of how risk information is used in state and local sentencing. Based on the analysis of existing tools, the white paper will also offer guidance on how to use the information collected through risk assessment tools. The final product will be a critical tool for BJA as it explores risk assessment policies and procedures, and the paper may be used to inform BJA funding priorities and strategies.

**II. OBJECTIVES**

Through this RFP, BJA NTTAC is seeking a provider to:

- Research the use of risk assessment in state and local sentencing.
- Analyze how risk assessment tools are used and how their use impacts sentencing and judicial decisionmaking.
- Examine topics as they relate to risk assessment at sentencing, such as considerations in tool selection, staff competencies, or credentials for the use of risk assessment tools; tool creation, validation, and revision; and additional mission-critical areas.
- Identify the result and impact of risk assessment use at sentencing.
- Translate the comprehensive assessment and evaluation into a white paper on the state of risk assessment use in state and local sentencing.

The following is a list of questions that should be addressed as part of the comprehensive examination of the use of risk assessment tools, along with illustrative examples.

- What tools are currently being used in sentencing at the state and local levels?
- For what purposes are sentencing risk assessment tools used?
- Is assessed risk of recidivism incorporated into sentencing guidelines?
- Are there restrictions on the use of risk information at sentencing?
- At what point, and in what form, do judges receive this information?
- Is risk assessment required, or is its use at the discretion of the judge?



- To what extent does risk information influence judicial decisionmaking?
- Does risk and/or needs assessment factor into release decisionmaking?
- To what extent have state judiciaries or court administrative offices considered the potential disparate impact, based on race or ethnicity or other group, of the use of risk assessment at sentencing? What steps, if any, have they taken to mitigate or eliminate such impact?

This effort should be supported by meetings with BJA stakeholders, either in person or virtual, to chart the project workflow and to present findings and answer questions from BJA and the Office of Justice Programs.

### III. DELIVERABLES

In addition to the deliverables the applicant proposes in order to accomplish the objectives of this engagement, the following standard TTA deliverables will be required for this engagement.

1. Develop, in coordination with BJA, **a plan** with guidelines for meeting critical deadlines, which will be delivered to BJA NTTAC prior to executing the services, and within 30 days from the start of the period of performance listed in the executed statement of work (SOW) that will be developed. The period of performance is estimated at three months, though longer and shorter proposed periods will be considered with adequate justification.
2. Deliver a **monthly status update** to demonstrate how the engagement is progressing as compared to the plan, and provide BJA NTTAC with any identified risks or issues that may impact the engagement from a quality, schedule, or cost perspective.
3. Compile a **White Paper** that contains a complete assessment of findings and recommendations for each objective outlined above. This detailed paper will be delivered to BJA NTTAC within 45 days from the period of performance end date listed in the executed SOW.
4. Produce an **Executive Summary** of the white paper, which will be made publicly available upon completion of this engagement.

### IV. HOW TO APPLY

Please submit the following in response to the RFP:

1. A narrative (not to exceed six double-spaced pages) that includes the following:
  - a. Knowledge and understanding of the issue(s) described in this RFP.
  - b. Tasks that outline the technical approach or methodology to achieve the objective(s) and deliverable(s) described in this RFP.
  - c. Relevant experience and capabilities related to the objective(s) described in this RFP.
2. A detailed and itemized budget that includes labor and all other direct costs.
3. A timeline that includes key tasks and deliverables related to completing the engagement.
4. A description of proposed staff that includes their relevant capabilities and a biographical statement or resume for each.

#### Notes:

- The budget, timeline, staff description, and resumes are not included in the four-page narrative limit;
- Labor rates for consultant fees should not exceed \$650.00 per day/per consultant;
- All travel costs including lodging and per diem rates must conform to the [Federal Travel Regulations](#) according to the [General Services Administration](#) (GSA);
- Applicants can expect to receive notification from BJA NTTAC within 30 days of the RFP deadline. BJA reserves the right to work with the selected provider on revising the proposed technical approach, budget, and timeline as necessary to complete the work. BJA NTTAC will contract directly with the provider to provide technical assistance to the requesting jurisdiction.

### V. EVALUATION CRITERIA



Responses to this RFP will be rated on the evaluation criteria displayed below, which adds together corresponding point values out of a possible 100:

- **Understanding of the Problem** (10 points)  
Responses must demonstrate the provider has a clear understanding of the requirements as outlined in the RFP. Points for this factor will be based on a judgment of the degree to which the provider understands and demonstrates the ability to achieve the objectives of this RFP.
- **Technical Approach** (30 points)  
This factor evaluates the extent to which the provider's response provides a clear, effective, innovative, and feasible approach to meeting the RFP requirements. The narrative response shall include the quality, comprehensiveness, and feasibility of methods and plans proposed to accomplish the required objectives. The technical approach should include what activities, such as onsite and offsite assistance, will be used to accomplish the objectives.
- **Relevant Experience/Capabilities** (10 points)  
This factor assesses the provider's ability to offer effective services throughout the life of this task. Responses must demonstrate the provider's previous experience offering similar services or capabilities.
- **Budget** (20 points)  
Each response will be evaluated based on the total proposed cost, including labor and other direct costs. In addition, this factor will include an assessment of the provider's response for completeness, realism, reasonableness, and risk.
- **Timeline** (10 points)  
This factor assesses the proposed period of performance provided by the provider for the ability to meet the objectives of this RFP, as well as for realism and reasonableness of the approach.
- **Staffing** (20 points)  
The provider must demonstrate that proposed personnel are optimally suited for the work to be performed. A resume or biographical statement must be included for each proposed individual.

#### VI. FUNDING RANGE

BJA anticipates that the budget for this request will range between \$15,000- \$20,000. However, cost proposals with budgets above and below this estimate will be evaluated and entertained.

Responses to this RFP should be **sent via e-mail** to [nttac@bjatraining.org](mailto:nttac@bjatraining.org) no later than **5:00pm EST on May 22, 2015**. If you have any questions, please contact BJA NTTAC coordinator **James Lah** at the e-mail listed above or via phone at (855) 252-8822. Please reference the attached "*Response to RFP Template*" for formatting guidelines and additional instructions on how to respond to this RFP.

