REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) FY 2026 Innovation RFA: Alternatives to Incarceration and Re-Entry Services and Interventions

Questions and Answers

1. Question: Can an organization submit more than one application?

Answer: Yes. An organization may submit more than one application as outlined in the RFA.

2. Question: Can an organization apply for funding for more than one program? And if so, does it have to be combined in one request with one budget but separate logic models. or should they be separate requests with their own separate logic models and budgets?

Answer: An organization may submit more than one application as outlined in the RFA. One application should be submitted for each program proposal. Each separate proposal must include a logic model and budget as outlined in the RFA. Please refer to RFA section X. Application Submission and Requirements and XI. Application Checklist for additional information.

3. Question: May the same organization submit two separate proposals simultaneously for different interventions?

Answer: Yes.

4. Questions: May the same organization submit two simultaneous proposals for different interventions in different locations?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Can you please confirm that a single proposal can propose to serve several regions within the state? For example, one proposal that includes services in NYC, as well as certain upstate counties.

Answer: If the proposed program is identical, but provides services in multiple regions, the RFA states that applicants may propose to provide program/services in a county, counties, or NYC boroughs. One application should be submitted for each program proposed.

6. Question: Please confirm that more than one county can be covered in a single application.



Answer: Yes. Applications for a <u>single</u> program proposal may propose to serve multiple counties.

7. Question: Can an organization submit more than one proposal to serve the same geographic area?

Answer: Yes. An organization may submit more than one application as outlined in the RFA. One application should be submitted for each program proposed.

8. Question: Is the following correct: One program (one application) can include components of both an innovation and EBP?

Answer: Yes, one program can include components of both demonstration and evidence-based services. An applicant can choose either category if aspects of both demonstration and evidence-based interventions are proposed in the application. DCJS reserves the right to adjust the anticipated allocated funding between each program area and should an application propose a program with components of both, to assign it to a program model.

9. Questions: If we are proposing innovative enhancements to our model that are not the EBPs referenced in the second category in the RFP, should we apply in the first or second category?

Answer: For programs that contain a combination of Evidence-Based and Demonstration elements, please refer to pages eight and nine in of the RFA regarding Demonstration Program, Services, or Interventions and Evidence-Based Services, Interventions, and/or Enhancements. When deciding under which category to submit your proposal, carefully review the components that you are submitting to be funded. Once reviewed please submit in the category you deem most appropriate. DCJS reserves the right to adjust the anticipated allocated funding between each program area and should an application propose a program with components of both, to assign it to a program model.

10. Question: What if the service model is innovative in design, but draws from evidence-based model? Which category should we select?

Answer: For programs that contain a combination of Evidence-Based and Demonstration elements, please refer to pages eight and nine in of the RFA regarding Demonstration Program, Services, or Interventions and Evidence-Based Services, Interventions, and/or Enhancements. When deciding which category to submit your proposal, carefully review the components that you are submitting to be funded. Once reviewed please submit in the category you deem most appropriate. DCJS reserves the right to adjust the anticipated allocated funding between each program area and should an application propose a program with components of both, to assign it to a program model.

11. Question: Are applicants permitted to apply for both categories (Demonstration and Evidence-Based) in separate proposals, or should they choose one?



Answer: Yes. An applicant may submit multiple applications from one organization relating to distinct projects as outlined in the RFA. An applicant may not submit a proposal for an identical program in both the Demonstration and Evidence Based categories. The application must select one or the other category. DCJS reserves the right to adjust the anticipated allocated funding between each program area and should an application propose a program with components of both, to assign it to a program model.

12. Question: Can the proposed program fall under both demonstration program and evidence-based interventions? Does only one have to be selected?

Answer: A single proposed program must choose one category to submit their proposal. An applicant may choose either category if aspects of both demonstration and evidence-based interventions are proposed in the application. DCJS reserves the right to adjust the anticipated allocated funding between each program area and should an application propose a program with components of both, to assign it to a program model.

13. Question: Could an application include a mix of evidence-based AND promising practices? If so, would it be considered a demonstration project?

Answer: A program can include components of both demonstration and evidence-based services in a single proposal. An applicant may choose either category if aspects of both demonstration and evidence-based interventions are proposed in the application. DCJS reserves the right to adjust the anticipated allocated funding between each program area and should an application propose a program with components of both, to assign it to a program model.

14. Question: Would a proposal for a new adaptation of evidence-based methods to an underserved population be considered under the Demonstration category or the Evidence-Based category?

Answer: For programs that contain a combination of Evidence-Based and Demonstration elements, please refer to pages eight and nine in of the RFA regarding Demonstration Program, Services, or Interventions and Evidence-Based Services, Interventions, and/or Enhancements. When deciding which category to submit your proposal, carefully review the components that you are submitting to be funded. Once reviewed please submit in the category you deem most appropriate. DCJS reserves the right to adjust the anticipated allocated funding between each program area and should an application propose a program with components of both, to assign it to a program model.

15. Question: Will DCJS permit multiple applications from one organization, related to distinct projects? If yes, does DCJS anticipate the potential for multiple awards to be made to one organization for distinct projects?



Answer: Yes. An applicant may submit multiple applications from one organization relating to distinct projects as outlined in the RFA. DCJS is not able to speculate on the outcome of awards at this point, but it is possible that a single entity could receive multiple awards. Please refer to the RFA Section V. Evaluation and Selection of Applications.

16. Question: Does this solicitation have any age restrictions for clients? Alternatively, are there any particular age groups that should be prioritized?

Answer: The target population for this solicitation includes individuals involved in, at risk of being involved in, or with previous involvement in the criminal justice system. Youth in the justice system not served within Criminal Court (Youth Part) are not in the target population of this RFA.

17. Question: Is the target population only 18+ or can youth in the juvenile justice system be served as well? How about youth ages 16–17 charged as adults or youth returning from placement?

Answer: The target population for this solicitation includes individuals involved in, at risk of being involved in, or with previous involvement in the criminal justice system. Youth in the justice system not served within Criminal Court (Youth Part) are not in the target population of this RFA.

18. Question: Is it allowable to serve youth, young adults ages 10-24 who are involved in or at risk of involvement with the criminal justice system.

Answer: The target population for this solicitation includes individuals involved in, at risk of being involved in, or with previous involvement in the criminal justice system. Youth in the justice system not served within Criminal Court (Youth Part) are not in the target population of this RFA.

19. Question: Can you define at risk of being involved in the criminal justice system?

Answer: DCJS intentionally left this term undefined. Applicants may propose to serve individuals with a myriad of risk factors that put them at risk of being involved in the justice system, including but not limited to individual, family, social, and community/environmental factors.

When determining if an individual is at risk of being involved in the criminal justice system, risk factors associated with the individual, the family, social circumstances, and community/environmental should be considered.

20. Question: Are there specific populations or geographic locations that are prioritized for funding consideration?

Answer: Please refer to the RFA Section V. Evaluation and Selection of Applications.

21. Question: Are there any priority populations related to this solicitation?



Answer: No. There is no priority population related to this solicitation.

22. Question: Is this funding in addition to the currently DCJS funded programs or is it replacing existing funding?

Answer: This funding is in addition to any currently funded programs who have existing contracts with DCJS. This is new funding building upon current or new programming and does not replace existing funding.

This includes any existing funding awarded through the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2022-23 Alternatives to Incarceration, Employment Focused Services and Jail Based Cognitive Behavioral Interventions Programs RFP or Article 13-A.

Please contact your DCJS grants representative should you have specific questions about any existing contracts.

23. Question: Will your agency accept the services as online or virtual, as this is what our program does nationwide?

Answer: The way the proposed program would operate is not specifically limited by this RFA. However, the proposed program **must** use any funding awarded through this RFA to only serve individuals in New York State.

24. Question: Is the sexual harassment prevention certification file up to date and applicable to this program?

Answer: Yes. The sexual harassment prevention certification form is up to date and applicable to applications as outlined in the RFA

25. Question: Is the approximately \$15.5 million expected to be available for this program to support awards ranging from \$250,000 to a maximum of \$1 million?

Answer: DCJS may make awards less than \$250,000 but not more than \$1,150,000 per each application as outlined in the RFA. DCJS anticipates that \$15.5 million will be available to support this RFA.

26. Question: Do we need to submit letters of support? Are they able to be included as a part of the proposal?

Answer: Letters of support are not required but can be submitted.

27. Question: If an applicant intends to rely on partner agency referrals, what type of documentation of commitment from referral partners is required at submission (letters of support; MOU)?



Answer: Letters of support are not required but can be submitted. Applicants should describe how the program proposes to partner with other agency(s) to deliver any aspect of services or interventions. As stated in the RFA Program Narrative Questions, please name the individual(s) and/or agency(s), describe the service(s) or intervention(s) they will be responsible for providing, and their roles and responsibilities in delivering these service(s) or intervention(s).

28. Question: Can we use the Attachments tab in GMS to include letters of support for our proposal? If so, is there a limit on how many letters/pages we are able to upload?

Answer: An applicant may use the Attachments section in GMS to include letters of support. There is no limit on how many letters/pages may be uploaded.

29. Question: Can you provide a list of the case level information that grantees would be required to put in the DCJS database?

Answer: Grantees will be asked to report case-level data to DCJS each month, including participant information (e.g., name, date of birth, NYSID number, risk or supervision level, as applicable), achievement dates for objectives in the work plan, last date of services, and program outcome (successful, unsuccessful, administrative discharge). CCDS is used for reporting by a variety of program models with different reporting requirements. After awards are made, DCJS will work with grantees to determine the specific data elements required for their program(s).

30. Question: What is required for a proposal to be considered evidence-based? Can you give examples of the kinds of evidence you will accept?

Answer: A proposal is considered evidence-based if it is supported by a sufficient body of high-quality research linking the program activities to positive outcomes. Evidence-based services and interventions are informed by the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) Model. Examples of evidence- based interventions include, but are not limited to, Diversion Services, Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions, Substance Use and Mental Health Services, and Employment Focused Programming. Direct services are not precluded.

31. Question: If my organization plans to submit an application as a demonstration project, can we include references to research that supports the programming?

Answer: Yes. Demonstration proposals are not required to have strong evidence-base to support the effectiveness of the intervention. Promising practices, approaches that show potential for improving outcomes or efficiency, but have not yet been formally evaluated as a "best practice" or "evidence-based practice, can be submitted.



32. Question: We have long envisioned a way to replicate the success of the Re-entry Task Force in addressing the needs of individuals reentering the community from jail. We would like to know if a funding application can include a request to expand the current Prison Re-entry Task Force to incorporate staffing and efforts related to jail re-entry, without the need to create a separate task force.

Answer: No, a request cannot be made to expand the County Re-Entry Task Forces to include jail re-entry, as the DCJS funded County Re-Entry Task Forces are not permitted to serve local jail populations. A separate program application can be submitted for a jail re-entry program.

33. Question: Are District Attorney Offices eligible to apply for this RFA as a unit of local government?

Answer: Each applicant must be able to enter into a contract with DCJS should an award be made. If that is the case for a District Attorney Office, then yes, they may apply for this RFA as a unit of local government.

34. Question: Police and district attorneys are not listed among the list from where participants can be referred (top of p. 8). Is this meant to be a comprehensive list?

Answer: Yes, police and District Attorneys can be referral sources. Applications should include referrals from any community partnership in their proposal.

35. Question: Can we propose an idea that is rated ineffective by Crime Solutions as a demonstration project if we can demonstrate a link between program activities and the intended goals of this RFP?

Answer: DCJS will not fund proposals where there is evidence that the proposed program, service, or intervention is likely to be ineffective in achieving stated goals. For example, program models rated as Ineffective, Negative Effects, or No Effects by CrimeSolutions or similar clearinghouses, will not be considered for funding.

36. Question: If a program combines methods of a Crime Solutions "effective program" and elements of an "ineffective program", is it eligible? The current model as it is currently delivered has not been assessed.

Answer: DCJS will not fund proposals where there is evidence that elements of the proposed program, service, or intervention is likely to be ineffective in achieving stated goals. For example, program models rated as Ineffective, Negative Effects, or No Effects by CrimeSolutions or similar clearinghouses, will not be considered for funding.

37. Question: Can we use this funding to bring our program fully in alignment with the General Operating Guidelines or DCJS Funded Community Corrections Programs? (We implement some but not all).



Answer: If an applicant is proposing to enhance an existing program, you must describe the components that are already in place, any proposed enhancements, and your timeline for implementing these enhancements. If you are proposing an enhancement to an existing program, please describe the components that are already in place, any proposed enhancements, and your timeline for implementing these enhancements.

38. Question: The RFA states that there is a requirement of monthly case-level data reporting. Is the required reporting de-identified information (no identifying information required)?

Answer: The required monthly case-level data includes identifiable information.

39. Question: The RFA speaks to "Alternatives to Incarceration <u>and</u> Re-Entry Services <u>and</u> Interventions." Will proposals to do any one (but not all three) be considered; i.e., just an ATI; just a re-entry program; just an intervention?

Answer: Yes, applicants can propose to provide an ATI, Re-Entry Services and/or Intervention.

40. Question: Would a program designed to serve a previously unreached population qualify for the "innovative" track, or is DCJS only concerned with innovations related to specific interventions?

Answer: No, serving an underserved population does not qualify as an "innovative" (demonstration) program. When deciding which category to submit your proposal, carefully review the components that you are submitting to be funded. Once reviewed please submit in the category most comparable. DCJS reserves the right to adjust the anticipated allocated funding between each program area and should an application propose a program with components of both, to assign it to a program model.

41. Question: Will scoring be given to applicants that leverage subawards with grassroots organizations, or is this only encouraged?

Answer: DCJS will score applications as outlined in section V. Evaluation and Selection of Applications.

42. Question: What level of detail is expected in the logic model—are applicants expected to include long-term outcomes beyond the first year of the contract?

Answer: All applicants must complete and submit a logic model clearly describing the program's goals, the activities intended to achieve those goals, the resources available and needed to perform those activities, metrics that will be used to monitor those activities, and the expected short-and long- term outcomes. For more information, refer to the Logic Model Guide here.



43. Question: What evidence standards are required for "promising practices"—is referencing external literature sufficient, or must programs show preliminary local data?

Answer: Promising practices, approaches that show potential for improving outcomes or efficiency, but have not yet been formally evaluated as a "best practice" or "evidence-based practice, can be submitted. If you consulted any literature in this process, please reference it in your response. Preliminary local data is not required.

44. Question: Can you please confirm whether a single organization can be awarded multiple awards under this RFA?

Answer: Yes. A single organization can be awarded multiple awards under this RFA.

45. Question: Is there a total amount of funding that one agency can receive?

Answer: No. However, please refer to section II. Funding, Applicant Eligibility and Contract Term for additional information regarding individual application award amounts. Also, please refer to section V. Evaluation and Selection of Applications for additional information regarding the awarding of funds.

46. Question: Can one agency be awarded up to \$1M for one program and, if submitting another proposal for a different program, up to \$1M for another?

Answer: Yes. However, please refer to section II. Funding, Applicant Eligibility and Contract Term for additional information regarding individual application award amounts.

47. Question: Can the population served with group interventions, i.e. CBI programming, include both parolee and other populations (ATI, pre-trial, iail release, probation)?

Answer: Applicants wishing to provide CBI programming for those on Community Supervision (Parole) with NYS DOCCS and other justice involved populations should consider the Risk Need Responsivity Model when determining group composition. Separate groups based on individual risk of recidivism, specific criminogenic needs, and personal learning style, are recommended. Per the General Operating Guidelines for DCJS Funded Community Corrections Programs, whenever possible, moderate to high-risk individuals should be treated separately from low-risk participants.

48. Question: On page 6, the guidelines state: "DCJS recognizes the importance of the metrics of program success that include recidivism but also expand beyond it to more fully capture the impact of a program on participants' lives (e.g., wellbeing, health, housing, employment, education, and family and community connections)." On that same page, however, it also states that "ineligible expenses may include housing security deposits." Since housing stability is listed as a core outcome measure of participant success, could you please clarify whether housing-related expenses (such as security deposits or first month's rent) are allowable or ineligible costs under this funding opportunity.



Answer: Rental security deposits are an ineligible expense under this funding opportunity. An application may include within the budget a request for funding first month's rent. The request will be reviewed as outlined in section VI. Request for Applications Questions, Question 8.

49. Question: Will awarded programs have the autonomy to screen and determine which applicants can be placed in this program, or will placement determination be done in tandem with DCJS? If the latter, are there specific placement criteria that will be used?

Answer: The target population for this solicitation includes individuals involved in, at risk of being involved in, or with previous involvement in the criminal justice system. Additionally, certain program models have predetermined eligibility criteria. Applicants should provide a detailed description of the screening, intake, and assessment process as per the RFA.

50. Question: Are there specific regulations relating to the proposed staffing structure?

Answer: As outlined in the RFA, programs should employ management and staff with the credentials, training, and experience necessary to effectively deliver proposed interventions and meet other program goals per the RFA.

51. Question: Is there an assumption that medication monitoring is incorporated into the program/treatment plan?

Answer: As outlined in the RFA, applications may propose comprehensive, person-centered approaches to Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders (MHSUD) services that not only offer pathways to treatment but also address the underlying trauma and structural barriers faced by justice-involved individuals. Applicants may develop programs that provide robust, trauma-informed mental health care and addiction recovery services, including but not limited to, counseling, residential programs, and Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) clinics, with a focus on seamless access upon release and sustained long-term support.

52. Question: Does DCJS provide regulatory guidance for housing programs?

Answer: No. DCJS does not provide regulatory guidance for housing programs, however, federal, state and local guidelines may apply.

53. Question: If there are conflicting regulations between DCJS, OASAS, and OMH, whose regulations would we default to?

Answer: Should an applicant receive an award from this RFA, DCJS will work with programs that intersect with other state agencies to mitigate any possible conflicting regulations.



54. Question: Is there a word or character count limit on the answers for the narrative and budget narrative responses?

Answer: No

55. Question: Is there an expected minimum/maximum length of stay requirement within the program?

Answer: No. Please refer to the Appendix General Operating Guidelines for DCJS Funded Community Corrections Programs for information on intensity and dosage of program interventions and / or services.

56. Question: Under the "Encouraging Use of NYS Business in Contract Performance, if we obtained office supplies, and equipment from vendors locally such as Staples or OfficeMax is that considered utilizing a NYS business?

Answer: Yes. However please see Section IX. Administration of Contracts Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Requirements for additional details.

57. Question: DUNS numbers were replaced with UEI, do we submit our UEI number instead?

Answer: There is no requirement to submit an UEI number for this RFA.

58. Question: Can you please clarify the requirements for and/or provide additional information on the Evidence-Based model? In reference to the Demonstration model, the RFA states, "Promising practices, approaches that show potential for improving outcomes or efficiency, but have not yet been formally evaluated as a 'best practice' or 'evidence-based practice', can be submitted." Does this mean the Evidence-Based model needs to be formally evaluated as a "best practice" or "evidence-based practice"? If so, can you please provide definitions for these two categories? In addition to this, do Evidence-Based programs need to be backed by evidence in Crimesolutions.ojp.gov or similar clearinghouses? Or can the evidence be from data gathered by the organization of past program successes and impact?

Answer: As outlined in the RFA, applicants may propose to deliver services or programming that provide evidence-based services and interventions informed by the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) Model. Examples of evidence- based interventions include, but are not limited to, Diversion Services, Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions, Substance Use and Mental Health Services, and Employment Focused Programming. Direct services are not precluded.

Demonstration proposals are not required to have a strong evidence-base to support the effectiveness of the intervention. Promising practices, approaches that show potential for improving outcomes or efficiency, but have not yet been formally evaluated as a "best practice" or "evidence-based practice, can be submitted.



DCJS will not fund proposals where there is evidence that the proposed program, service, or intervention is likely to be ineffective in achieving stated goals. For example, program models rated as Ineffective, Negative Effects, or No Effects by <u>CrimeSolutions</u> or similar clearinghouses, will not be considered for funding.

Proposals for demonstration programs are required to demonstrate that the program design is reasonably likely to achieve the desired goals through a logic model. This logic model is intended to help applicants and DCJS understand the central goals of the proposed program and clarify how program components will achieve the desired outcomes. For both Demonstration and Evidence Based Program models, applicants must provide how they plan to accomplish desired goals through a logic model.

59. Question: Page 6 of the grant RFA states that ineligible expenses "may" include vehicle purchases. Our proposal would like to include a mobile outreach office targeting formerly incarcerated individuals in their communities after release to assist with their transition and access to wrap around interventions and services. Is this type of community outreach vehicle purchase permitted, and can it be funded through this grant?

Answer: The purchasing of vehicles in an ineligible expense under this RFA. However, applications may include for consideration a request for other methods of transportation such as leasing a vehicle, or other transportation services such as public transit passes and tickets, mileage reimbursement or ride-share vouchers. Should a vehicle lease be requested, DCJS would need for the vehicle's expense to be cost effective, justified, and necessary for key programming objectives.

60. Question: We have noted that the RFP indicates that that indirect costs of up to 15% of total direct costs may be reimbursed to not-for-profit organizations. If a not-for-profit organization has a federally approved indirect cost rate agreement that exceeds 15%, can that rate be used?

Answer: No. The maximum indirect rate that may be requested, with proper justification, under this RFA is 15%. As this program is exclusively funded with State dollars a federally negotiated rate is not applicable.

61. Question: In the introduction it states in number 1 that; "applicants who are not registered in GMS will need a "user access". Is that the same or different then us being pre-qualified through SFS?

Answer: The DCJS grants management system (GMS) is not the same system as the NYS statewide financial system (SFS). Both require their own individual access. User access to GMS is not the same as being pre-qualified through SFS.

62. Question: Are the budget limits (anticipated award amounts of \$250,000 to \$1,000,000) annual amounts or for what could be the 5-year-life of the project?



Answer: Budget limits as outlined in Section II. Funding, Applicant Eligibility and Contract Term, are for an annual amount.

63. Question: On page 2 of the RFA it states the grant opportunity will be for one year with an initial term of April 1, 2026, through March 31, 2027, with four optional one-year renewals as determined by DCJS. Can you please clarify this? Does this just mean there will be possible grant extensions to give more time to spend down the grant amount initially awarded? Or does this mean there potentially could be additional funds awarded after year one?

Answer: Should DCJS provide a grantee awarded under this RFA a one-year renewal, it is anticipated that the renewal would be for the same one-year amount as originally awarded. Funding awarded under this RFA may not be carried over from one budget term to the next. Please refer to Section IX. Administration of Contracts for additional details. If a grantee received an award of \$1,000,000 and the optional one-year renewal is activated, it would be anticipated that they receive a new \$1,000,000 for the next one-year period.

64. Question: For the current Alternatives to Incarceration and Re-entry Services and Interventions RFA, may an Offeror reference or attach materially identical content from a prior submission in its response? If permitted, please specify (i) the appropriate placement (e.g., narrative vs. appendix/attachments) and (ii) whether such attachments count toward any page limits. If not permitted, please advise on the compliant way to cite or summarize previously submitted materials.

Answer: Application content not included in an application submission cannot be reviewed for scoring. Please refer to the RFA for additional information on submission requirements.

Questions and Answers may have been edited for clarity and/or to avoid duplication.