



Who are we?

The *National Institute of Justice* (NIJ) is the research, evaluation, and development arm of the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ). NIJ actively supports research and evaluation (R&E) with American Indian and Alaska Native communities on issues of crime and justice. In doing so, NIJ is committed to ethical and engaged efforts in line with responsible research conduct and federal trust responsibilities.

What is our challenge?

Although we strive to fund projects related to tribal crime and justice, few grants in this area get funded. While the lack of funded grants has many causes, one factor is that many applications have research-trained staff with little to no experience in working with tribal communities *as partners* in the R&E process.

What is our goal?

Our ultimate goal is to increase the number of successfully funded grants for R&E on issues related to tribal crime and justice. We also hope to create a pool of trained researchers and evaluators that can assist tribes with their R&E tribal projects in the future.

How will we achieve our goal?

NIJ is considering creating a *Tribal Investigator Development Program (TIDP)* that will:

- Provide training to researchers and evaluators on the principles of ethical and engaged research with tribal communities.
- Provide training to tribes on the R&E process and the development and/or implementation of best practices to ensure equitable and mutually beneficial R&E partnerships.
- Facilitate tribal-investigator-mentor partnerships that result in tangible and mutually beneficial projects.

Who will benefit?

NIJ believes that a TIDP has the potential to benefit multiple partners, including:

- **Tribes** by providing access to highly qualified and trained researchers and evaluators to develop, implement, and assess the effects of programs and practices. Additionally, it will aid tribes in being more confident, competitive, and successful in applying for grant opportunities from USDOJ grant agencies (OJP, COPS, and OVW) and other federal agencies (CDC, NIH, NSF) for the direct benefit of tribal citizens.
- **Investigators** by providing applied experience in working with tribal communities and serving as a foundation for successful grant applications in the future. For investigators from tribal communities, it will also increase the representation of American Indian and Alaska Native investigators in justice systems R&E.
- **NIJ** by creating a pool of qualified and interdisciplinary investigators better equipped to apply for grant opportunities, ultimately resulting in more funded R&E on issues of tribal crime and justice.

How can you help us achieve our goal?

Share your thoughts. To ensure that a TIDP results in equitable and mutually beneficial partnerships, we are seeking feedback from tribal leaders, organizations, program staff, and citizens on what they think would be most necessary and beneficial in a TIDP. This feedback is *essential* to the success of the TIDP. All input will be considered thoroughly and will be greatly appreciated as we continue through this information gathering process.

**What type of feedback would we like?**

Anything and everything. We welcome all opinions and ideas. Some framing questions that we are interested in getting your feedback on are:

- Is there a need for this type of program?
- What are the key areas that should be included in a training curriculum for tribal investigators?
- Is there a need to provide training to tribes on R&E partnerships?
- What should a tribal-researcher/evaluator partnership look like?
- What benefits would tribes like to see in a R&E partnership?
- How can NIJ best facilitate these partnerships?
- What would be the most important elements of R&E collaborations between tribal communities and scientists?

Any and all feedback will be greatly appreciated and thoroughly considered as we move forward with this process. If you have any suggestions, feedback, or questions, please contact us at TribalResearch@usdoj.gov.

NIJ will be holding a listening session on this new proposed program at the 15th National Indian Nations Conference being held at the Renaissance Palm Springs Hotel, Thursday, December 8, 2016 from 1:30 to 3:00 PM PST in the Smoke Tree D/E conference rooms. We encourage you to join us at this session to discuss this program with other tribal stakeholders. For more information on the conference and to access the agenda, please go to <http://www.ovcinc.org/home>.