The National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) have partnered as co-sponsors to welcome proposals for establishment of Industry/University Cooperative Research Centers in areas relevant to the forensic sciences. With permission from the Principal Investigator (PI), NIJ will share in evaluation of forensics-related I/UCRC proposals, and may co-sponsor successful proposals.

The I/UCRC program develops long-term partnerships among industry, academia, and government. The centers are catalyzed by a small investment from NSF; their research is primarily funded by center members, with NSF playing a supporting role in the development and evolution of the center. These sponsorship roles can be shared by NSF and NIJ for forensics-relevant I/UCRCs, providing additional valuable perspective.

Proposals are welcome on a range of topics relevant to the forensic sciences. Examples of center foci that would be considered relevant and of interest include but are not limited to: human judgment and decision making (including the potential role and mitigation of cognitive bias and human error in the collection, processing, analysis and interpretation of evidence and reporting of results); new principles and approaches for remote and field-based chemical measurement and imaging; and pattern-based analysis. Proposals submitted in response to this letter should adhere to the terms and guidance in the I/UCRC solicitation including requirements for a letter of intent. The title should begin with the phrase “Forensics I/UCRC:” followed by a brief descriptor or center title that conveys the main focus or foci. Investigators are urged to read and carefully follow the guidance in the solicitation, and to consult the I/UCRC program staff listed therein prior to submission. Relevant topics may engage disciplines in any NSF directorate as well as at other agencies. Questions addressing NSF support of fundamental research relevant to forensics challenges may be addressed by e-mail to forensic-science-inquiries@nsf.gov.