



**2016-2017 Academic Year**  
**1 Research Assistantship (Doctoral Students only)**  
**Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE)**  
**Placement ID: CCSI**

**Topic Area:** School Safety

**Program Overview:** The Department of Justice Appropriations Act of 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235) calls for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to administer the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI). Through this initiative, NIJ aims to build science-based knowledge about the causes of school violence and test innovative approaches for safeguarding our Nation's students and schools. In 2014, the first year of the Initiative, NIJ awarded more than \$68 million for more than 30 research projects and programs to improve school safety. In 2015, NIJ funded more than 30 additional projects valued at over \$69 million. Projects under CSSI feature partnerships among schools, scientists, law enforcement, mental health professionals, and others. All CSSI funded projects contribute to one or more of the three primary goals of the initiative:

- Improve the safety of schools and students nationwide by developing, supporting, and rigorously evaluating school safety programs, practices, and strategies.
- Develop and test a comprehensive school safety framework for K-12 public schools that is based on research evidence and may be adopted by a wide range of schools.
- Increase scientific knowledge about the incidence and root causes school violence and other threats to school and student safety.

CSSI seeks to provide objective and independent answers to the wide range of difficult school safety challenges that the Nation faces. Through this initiative, NIJ will produce findings that will help practitioners and policymakers to reach informed decisions about which interventions and programs are most effective – and most cost effective. CSSI encompasses a wide range of topics, including but not limited to: school violence, school discipline, school climate, the role of law enforcement in schools, school security, mental health, threat assessment, bullying, and school safety planning. For more information on NIJ's CSSI, please go to <http://nij.gov/topics/crime/school-crime/pages/school-safety-initiative.aspx>.

**Research assistant project task responsibilities may include but are not limited to:**

- Compiling, summarizing, revising, or making use of complex, technical, or specialized literature.
- Participating in data collection activities related to school safety.
- Extracting and compiling data from written sources, from individuals (questionnaires and interviews), or from existing databases.
- Assisting in research design strategies (e.g., developing and modifying research proposals, procedures, or tools/instruments).
- Processing and summarizing data using scientific or statistical techniques.
- Assisting in data interpretation and analyses to generate reports/papers.
- Assisting in developing research questions and designs for intramural studies.
- Assisting in preparing materials for Institutional Review Board (IRB) review for intramural studies.
- Conceptualizing and drafting publications (such as government reports, peer-reviewed journal articles, NIJ publications, and trade magazine articles).
- Drafting and presenting presentations at conferences (where funding permits and the University approves).
- Recording, compiling, and reporting information related to the research program and activities with a focus on relevance for the policy or practitioner fields; preparing policy briefs; and assisting with responses to Congressional inquiries.



- Assisting with coordination of research activities and participating in intra- and inter-agency working groups (e.g., other federal science agencies and stakeholders such as the Institute of Education Sciences, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Executive Office for the United States Attorneys, Federal Bureau of Investigation).
- Assisting with outreach activities and research dissemination activities (e.g., meeting presentations, articles, webinars).

### **Candidate Eligibility Criteria**

- Demonstrated knowledge of the U.S. criminal justice system and the U.S. juvenile justice system **required**.
- Demonstrated knowledge of U.S. K-12 public schooling policies and practices **preferred**.
- Demonstrated knowledge of intermediate to advanced social science research and evaluation methods and analysis **required**.
- Demonstrated experience in social or behavioral science related to crime or violence prevention **required**.
- Demonstrated knowledge of school safety research and evaluation **preferred**.
- Demonstrated knowledge of juvenile delinquency and juvenile justice issues **preferred**.

### **General Required Qualifications**

- Education and/or Experience: Doctoral students working toward a terminal degree (e.g., Ph.D., D.P.A., Dr.PH., D.H.Sc., D.S.W., Psy.D., Ed.D.).
- Mathematical Skills: Very good to advanced understanding of statistical principles and research methods (quantitative and qualitative).
- Computer Skills: Working knowledge of computers and standard software such as Adobe Professional, Excel, Internet Explorer, Outlook, Windows operating systems, Word, and PowerPoint required. Proficiency using SPSS, SAS, or Stata. Knowledge of other statistical or geospatial software a plus.
- Reasoning Ability: Ability to work independently, accurately, and in a timely manner.
- Communication Skills: Ability to communicate orally and in writing to prepare comprehensive research reports, proposals, and presentations and make recommendations to accomplish and enhance project objectives.
- Certifications, Licenses, Registrations: Human Subjects (HS) Protection training is required. NIJ research assistants must take annual HS training onsite at the Office of Justice Programs. RAs also must successfully complete CITI training prior to participating on any studies.
- Background Check: Candidates must complete all required U.S. Department of Justice profile and pre-screening paperwork with all security reviews and background investigations (such as credit and criminal investigations) resulting in a favorable adjudication.
- Citizenship: Candidates must be U.S. citizens.

**Work Location:** Primary work location will be at NIJ's offices in Washington, D.C. Minimal local travel in the National Capital Region may be needed to attend meetings and visit offsite research facilities.