



## OSAC Research Needs Assessment Form

### Title of research need:

### Keywords:

Assessing the culture of contextual bias in forensic scene evidence collection, handling, and processing.

### Submitting subcommittee(s):

Crime Scene Investigation

### Date Approved:

Sept. 30,  
2016

*(If SAC review identifies additional subcommittees, add them to the box above.)*

### Background information:

#### 1. Description of research need:

Examining the effects of contextual bias at the crime scene (for example and not limited to the presence of law enforcement on scene, fatigue, psychological trauma, shift work, nature of criminal activity) that may effect on-scene investigations, subsequent testing analysis, and adjudication of case.

#### 2. Key bibliographic references relating to this research need:

Thomson, W. SAMSI, 2015. Managing Contextual Bias in Forensic Science.  
Kassen, S., Dror, I., Kukucka, J. Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition, 2013. The forensic confirmation bias: Problems, perspectives, and proposed solutions.  
Haber, R., Haber, L. Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition, 2013. The culture of science: Bias and forensic evidence.

#### 3a. In what ways would the research results improve current laboratory capabilities?

It is important to read specific scene information prior to the analysis of the submitted evidence from the scene. By anticipating potential contextual bias from complex crime scene investigations the lab can prepare for this and thereby improve their capabilities.

3b. In what ways would the research results improve understanding of the scientific basis for the subcommittee(s)?

Understanding the basis for contextual bias of those involved in crime scene investigation casework is essential. With adequate training and education is hoped that the crime scene investigator will be aware of this potential bias and therefore prevent any loss of reliability and validity (the science) in the investigation at the scene.

3c. In what ways would the research results improve services to the criminal justice system?

Eliminate untoward effects related to the crime scene investigation and subsequent testing in the crime laboratory.

4. Status assessment (I, II, III, or IV):

I

	Major gap in current knowledge	Minor gap in current knowledge
No or limited current research is being conducted	<b>I</b>	<b>III</b>
Existing current research is being conducted	<b>II</b>	<b>IV</b>

*This research need has been identified by one or more subcommittees of OSAC and is being provided as an informational resource to the community.*

Subcommittee

Approval date:

September 30, 2016

*(Approval is by majority vote of subcommittee. Once approved, forward to SAC.)*

SAC

1. Does the SAC agree with the research need? Yes No

2. Does the SAC agree with the status assessment? Yes No

*If no, what is the status assessment of the SAC:*

Approval date:

Feb. 9, 2017

*(Approval is by majority vote of SAC. Once approved, forward to NIST for posting.)*