

Impact Report 2023

COGJUS

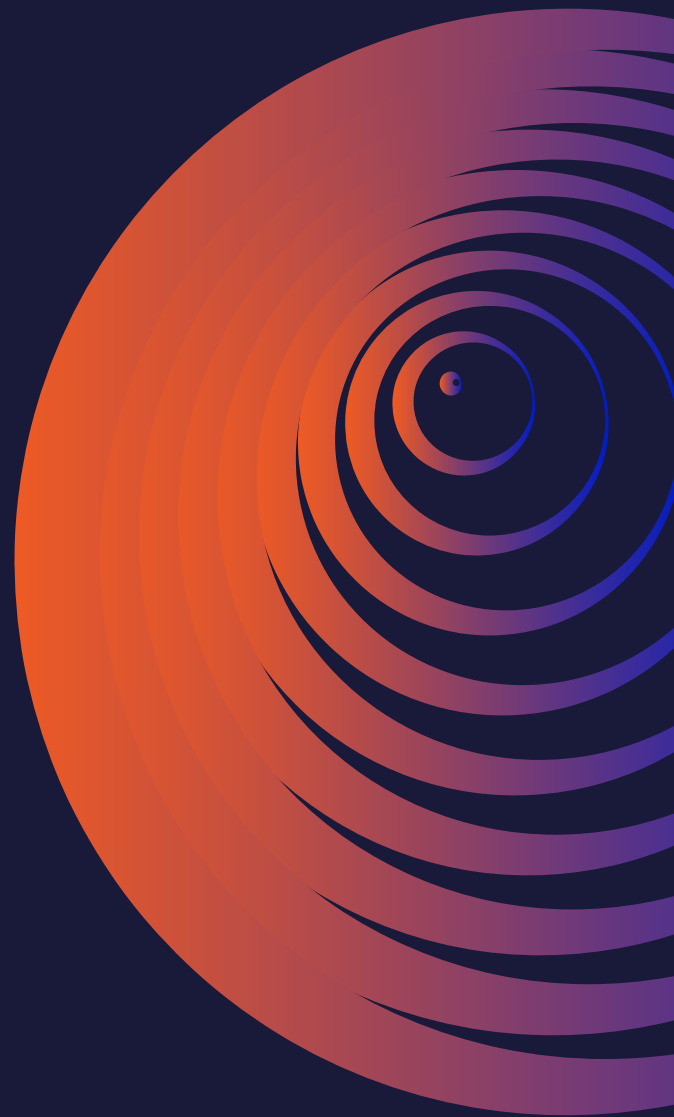
Laboratório de
Ensino e Pesquisa
em Cognição e Justiça

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Introduction

The objective of this report is to conduct a detailed analysis of the impact of activities carried out by the Laboratory of Teaching and Research in Cognition and Justice (CogJus) throughout the year 2023. Our aim is to contextualize and justify the relevance of our actions by providing a comprehensive evaluation of the results achieved in alignment with our goals. Furthermore, we seek to identify areas for improvement and outline guidelines for future initiatives. This report also aims to promote the transparency of CogJus by providing valuable information to stakeholders both internally and externally, thereby enabling our organization to be recognized for its contributions to the advancement of the Brazilian Justice and Public Security System.





Why do we need the
dialogue between
cognition and justice?

Victims, witnesses, and suspects are crucial sources of information for the justice and security system. Through interviews, interrogations, and eyewitness identification procedures, vital information is obtained to understand facts that will be investigated and/or judged, guiding judicial decisions that significantly impact the lives of those involved. However, the quantity and reliability of the information collected are directly related to **how it is gathered**.

Questions posed during interviews and interrogations can limit the amount of information or even induce responses, leading to unreliable accounts. Inadequate techniques can cause victims and witnesses to report incorrect information, generate false memories, or even lead innocent suspects to confess to crimes they did not commit. Research indicates that in Brazil, the lack of scientifically-based protocols and training can lead justice and public security professionals to use harmful practices for obtaining statements, such as suggestive questioning or psychological coercion of suspects.

When a suspect is presented for eyewitness identification, the justice system is again prone to flawed practices. Various factors can lead a person to wrongly identify an innocent individual as the perpetrator

of a crime. It is estimated that in **70% of cases where a person was wrongfully convicted, they were identified by one or more witnesses**. A study by the Public Defender's Office of Rio de Janeiro found that over one year, 58 innocent suspects, 70% of whom were Black, were misidentified as perpetrators of crimes they did not commit.


Errors in interviews, interrogations, and eyewitness identifications have been studied for over five decades by international researchers. This robust body of evidence indicates which procedures increase the risk of error and which produce more reliable evidence. These studies are based on **Cognitive Science**, a field that explores how people perceive, think, understand, and remember information. Cognitive Science analyzes the mental processes of victims, witnesses, suspects, and justice system professionals, such as police officers and judges, to understand how they process and communicate information. The application of Cognitive Science has led to significant changes in judicial practices globally, resulting in the development of protocols, laws, and procedures, as well as the **implementation of scientifically-based training** aligned with human rights.



CogJus aims to **foster the dialogue for changing interview and interrogation practices through the implementation of Investigative Interview protocols.**

Investigative Interviewing is an approach that proposes replacing coercive interrogation and closed, suggestive questioning with interviews based on building rapport and strategically using questions to achieve effective police work while ensuring legal due process. These practices have been recommended by various countries and by the ***Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering*** (Méndez Principles), recommended by the United Nations (UN).

CogJus also promotes **the adoption of appropriate methods for eyewitness identification**, seeking reliable indications and evidence through memory. The goal is to standardize the process, from the instructions to witnesses to the presentation

of suspects and the collection of responses. These methods, based on scientific evidence, aim to improve the efficiency of the Justice and Public Security System. They align with recent legislation and regulations in Brazil, ***exemplified by Resolution 484 of the National Council of Justice.*** 

The standardization and continuous updating of procedures, supported by Cognitive Science, provide a clear route to a more effective and fair Justice and Public Security System. International experience already demonstrates the success of these practices, which are now gaining momentum in Brazil through active collaboration between professionals and academics. The adoption of regular and scientifically-based training for justice system operators not only aligns Brazil with international best practices but also strengthens respect for human rights, paving the way for a more equitable and efficient justice system.



About **CogJus**



Who we are

CogJus, the Laboratory of Teaching and Research in Cognition and Justicea, was founded in 2021 as a project of the Meridional Foundation, in collaboration with the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR). Its mission is to promote the adoption of scientifically-based techniques to enhance the interactions of the justice and public security system with victims, witnesses, and suspects.

CogJus advocates for the importance of **ongoing dialogue between researchers and justice system professionals** to implement effective procedures for interviews, interrogations, and eyewitness identifications. Our goal is to establish and encourage environments of dialogue, training, and research, promoting appropriate practices that are aligned with national realities and anchored in scientific foundations and human rights principles.

How we operate



Education and Training

Education and Training: We offer specialized training programs in Investigative Interviewing Techniques and Eyewitness Identification Procedures. Our priority is to collect information **ethically, efficiently, and respectfully**, with a particular emphasis on understanding the fundamentals of **Cognitive Science**. Our goal is to align interventions with current legal regulations and scientific advancements, promoting the practical

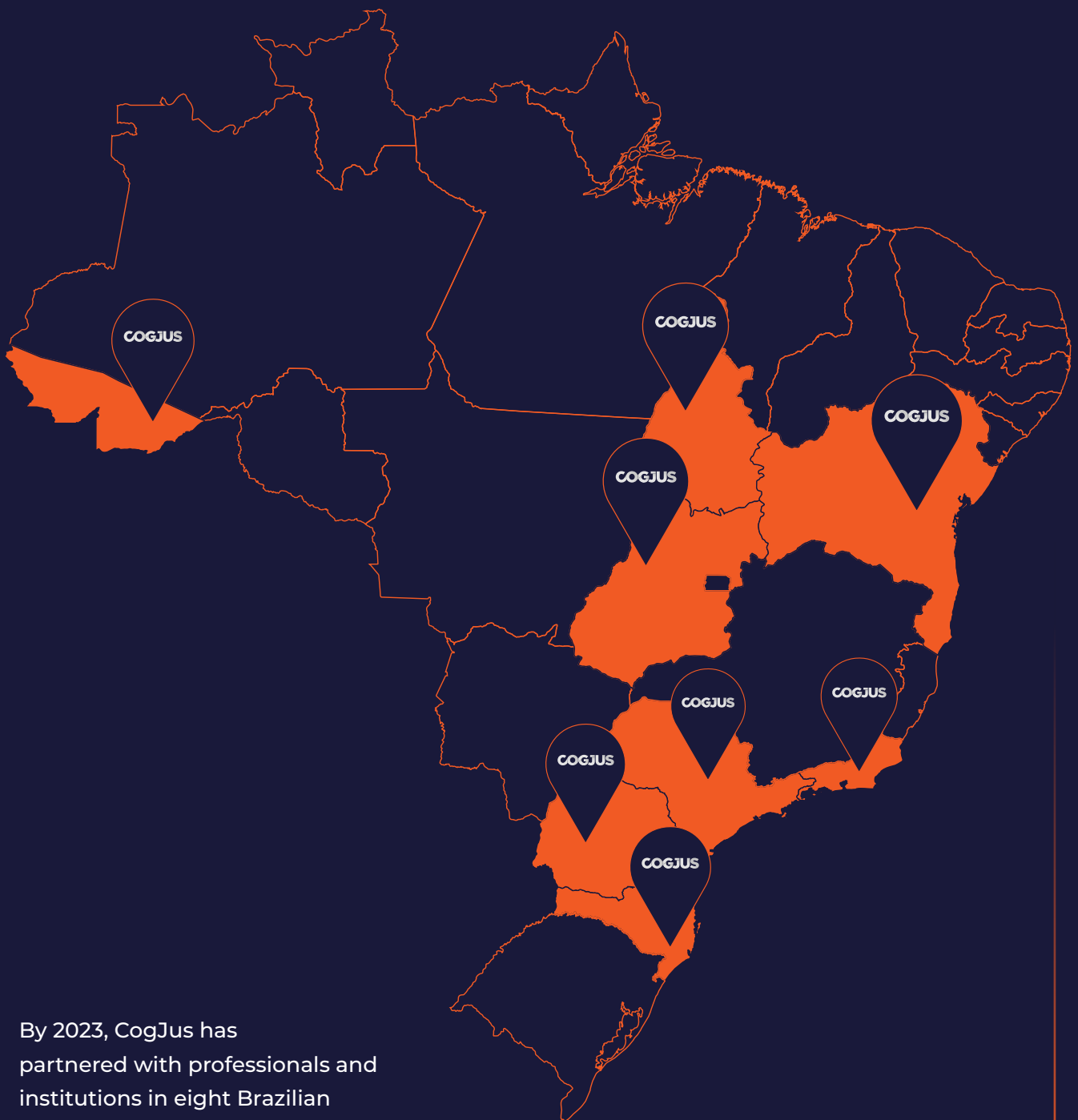
application of knowledge. To achieve this, we develop manuals, video lessons, and exercises to provide professionals in various fields access to standardized and scientifically grounded practices. Additionally, we conduct quantitative and qualitative research with instructors and professionals to enhance the effectiveness of existing methodologies and identify new opportunities for innovation.



Evaluation and Research

We develop assessment materials using direct and indirect methods to measure the impact of our training interventions. We produce quantitative and qualitative studies focused on instructors and professionals to improve the efficiency of current practices and discover potential innovations. Our contributions to academic

research expand the understanding of investigative interviews and related topics, providing benefits not only for law enforcement professionals but also for the **field of criminal justice through new data and perspectives**. With this, we aim to promote advancement and excellence in the sector.



By 2023, CogJus has partnered with professionals and institutions in eight Brazilian states: **Santa Catarina, Paraná, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Goiás, Bahia, Tocantins, and Acre.**

Our team

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Projects

Group of Supervising Professors

(Grupo de Professores Supervisores - GPS)

The Group of Supervising Professors (GPS), composed of instructors from Civil Police academies, plays a crucial role in advocating for a combination of scientific rigor and compassionate understanding in investigative interviews. This group includes professionals from the police academies of the states of Paraná, Santa Catarina, São Paulo, Bahia, and Goiás. Their primary responsibility is **to develop and implement strategies to**

incorporate Investigative Interview techniques in their respective regions.

To ensure the effectiveness and relevance of these techniques, academy directors and instructors meet monthly. They engage in in-depth discussions about the integration and teaching of Investigative Interviewing in the curricula of their Police academies.



GPS Results

Curriculum Development

A curriculum for initial training of Police Commissioners and Judicial Police professionals was developed, emphasizing ethical, effective, and scientific interview methods. This curriculum, collaboratively formulated by professors from six states, offers an overview of Investigative Interview techniques in a 12-hour course format.

Training Impact

GPS members were responsible for training over 4,000 police officers across Brazil in 2023 in their respective states. They provided continuous training, developed teaching materials, and facilitated interdisciplinary collaboration. CogJus supported these efforts through consulting services for instructors and by developing educational materials used in the trainings.

Monthly Strategic Meetings

Professors from Civil Police Academies hold monthly meetings focused on the integration and teaching of Investigative Interviewing



Member Testimonials

*“The partnership with CogJus was fundamental. It helped me tremendously, especially in terms of motivation, as I was pursuing this alone. You know how difficult it is to continue alone, to study alone... But not anymore. Now it’s a partnership with researchers, and I found this partnership initiative fantastic because it offers a completely different perspective on how to replicate this. We [the police] have a very practical view. We have learned through our cultural history to learn from older people, how they do things. [...] **This partnership [with CogJus] helped me a lot. We managed to develop the material, exercises for the class, and this provided me with essential support.** So, look at this year: we trained 400 officers plus 1,017 new officers. Not only that, but we have materials that we created, materials we left here at the school, and the curricular matrix that you helped create, which we didn’t have before.”*

Professor at the Police Academy of Goiás

*“What’s important is that CogJus, in addition to introducing the new technique, also brings the scientific foundation of this technique. So even with those officers who are more resistant to new ideas, when you present a certain topic with a scientific background, it holds a lot of value, a lot of value indeed. **Because they see that the instructor is teaching something that isn’t based on assumptions, it isn’t amateurish.**”*

Professor at the Police Academy of São Paulo

There are no words to thank you for the support you provide. I think this group that has formed, with people willing to discuss ideas, has a lot of quality material. The meetings even push us to keep updated. So, CogJus is essential for this, transmitting knowledge to the instructors and making us update ourselves as well.

Professor at the Police Academy of Paraná

*“When we talk about investigative interview research in the police field, we see research from other countries. But what about when it comes to Brazil and Brazilians? Because one of the things I always criticized about other protocols is that it’s a methodology that might work, might be suitable for Americans, who have a different legal system, a different sociocultural system [...] **so starting to work with research in police activities here can provide more credibility.**”*

Professor at the Police Academy of Santa Catarina



1st National Seminar on Investigative Interviewing: Challenges and Perspectives

The 1st National Seminar on Investigative Interviewing, held on November 29-30, 2023, in São Paulo, marked a pivotal moment in the dissemination of Investigative Interviewing techniques in Brazil.

Organized by CogJus, the seminar aimed **to finalize the guidelines and curriculum for an initial training course in Investigative Interviewing**, fostering discussions on future perspectives and consolidating strategic partnerships.



Results

Educational Advancement

The event emphasized the importance of advanced training in Investigative Interviewing, focusing on techniques for addressing suspects and integrating these techniques into existing training programs

Advocacy Discussion

Participants developed strategies to engage governmental entities and NGOs, highlighting the importance of legal reforms to facilitate the implementation of Investigative Interviewing techniques

Masterclass on Memory

Lilian Stein led a session providing insights into human memory, contributing to the theoretical and practical enhancement of instructors in Investigative Interviewing.

Strategic Meeting with Senasp

A meeting was held with the National Public Security Secretariat to discuss challenges and present the developed curriculum, underscoring the seminar's impact on national public security policies

Guideline Development

Detailed guidelines for teaching Investigative Interviewing were developed and made available online, ensuring consistency and quality in training across various police academies and schools.

Planning and Future Perspectives

The seminar resulted in the creation of an action plan for 2024, which includes the dissemination of the initial training curriculum in Investigative Interviewing, publication of books, offering advanced courses, hosting national seminars, and collecting data to evaluate the effectiveness of the training.

Initial Training in Investigative Interviewing Techniques (FITE)



Program Structure and Implementation

FITE is a **comprehensive training program for professionals in investigative interviewing**, structured into three distinct stages: Self-Directed Study, Synchronous Stage, and Follow-Up Stage. This structure allowed participants to engage with the material flexibly

and apply the learning in a practical context. In 2023, the training included **49 professionals**, notably instructors from police academies and members of the Homicide and Personal Protection Division in Salvador/BA



Results



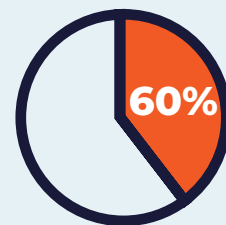
**49
police
officers**

participated in
2023



**+100
police officers**

from 10 states impacted
between 2021 and 2023



**60% of
participants**

had not taken any specific
course for hearings/
interrogations after their initial
training at the police academy



Pre- and Post-Training Evaluation

- After the training, participants demonstrated greater adherence to proper interrogation practices, emphasizing a rights-based approach and reducing support for coercive methods.
- Participants reported high satisfaction with the training and an increased understanding of ethical interrogation practices.



Identification of Challenges and Practical Applications

- Participants identified operational challenges and the need for specialized approaches in interviewing vulnerable groups.
- Real case experiences shared by participants demonstrated the effectiveness of the training in solving criminal cases.





Participant Testimonials

*"I applied the Investigative Interview method in homicide cases involving suspects accompanied by lawyers, and I certainly obtained more details in the reports, **which led me to a better (qualitative) decision, rather than the quantity of decisions.**"*

*"Through the techniques learned in the training, several cases were resolved more quickly, **speeding up justice and bringing relief to victims.**"*

*"This is not the first course I have taken on the subject, and I can highlight that **the teaching methodology applied here is the most current and effective I have ever seen.**"*

*"The use of investigative interviews brings a paradigm shift, with the professionalization of police work and **a better perception of our work by the community.**"*

*"During the course, **I learned to understand the importance of a friendly approach** to obtaining crucial information in the investigative process."*

Laboratory Police Station in Salvador/BA

The Laboratory Police Station project in Salvador/BA, executed in 2023, aimed to enhance the proficiency of local police in employing Investigative Interview techniques, particularly in the challenging criminal context of Salvador. Thus, civil police officers participated in

specific training and received follow-up from the CogJus team to assist in the implementation and use of Investigative Interviewing in the police stations where they work.



Initial Training and Follow-Up Program

32 police officers engaged in a comprehensive course from April to July 2023. Eight professionals were selected and received additional in-depth training on September 21, 2023, focusing on the practical application

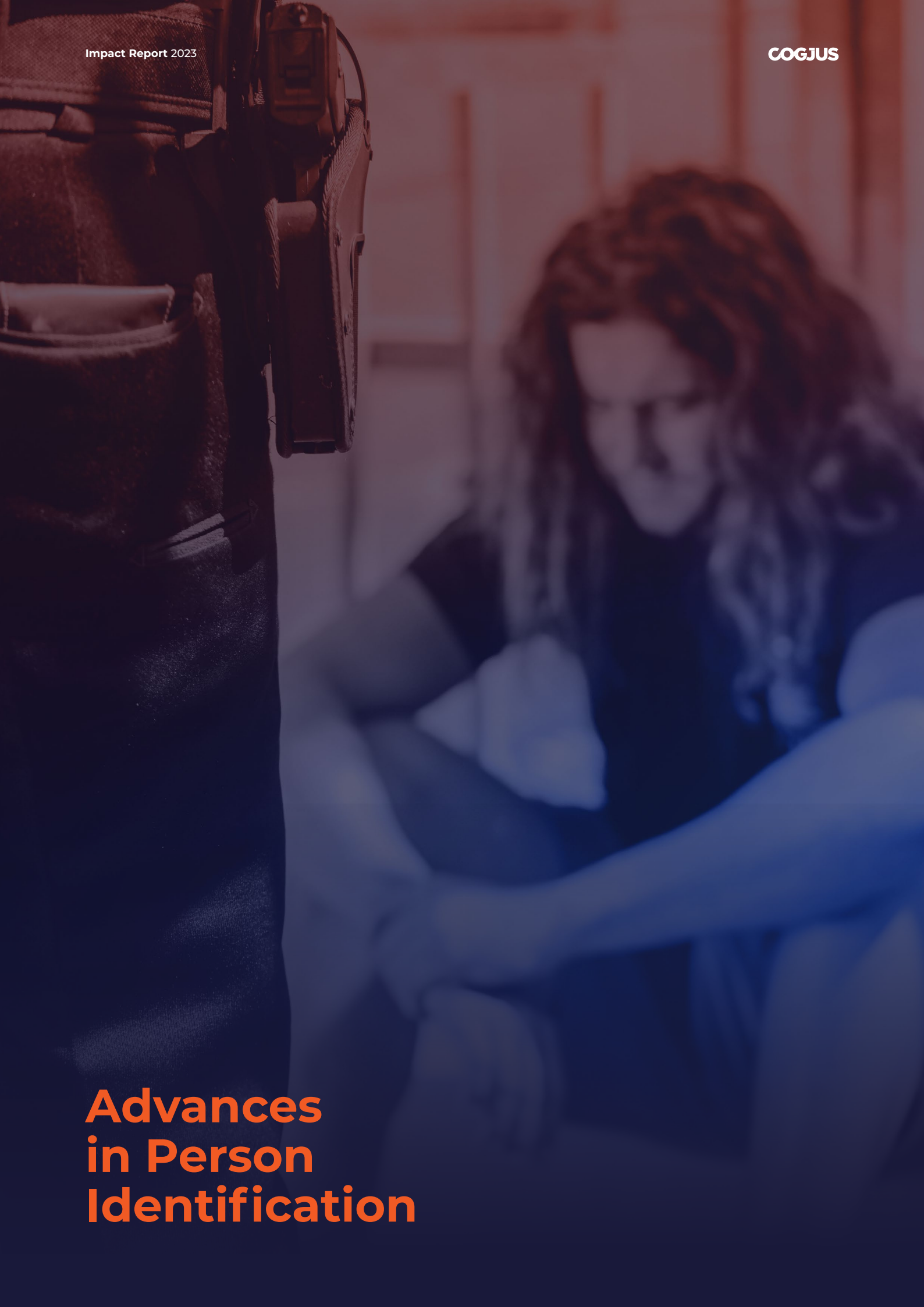
of Investigative Interview techniques. This intervention included specialized insights from Anselmo Cruz, a specialist in Investigative Interviewing and complex crime investigations.



Initial Results

Significant increase in conducted interviews (from 845 to 1172) and closed cases (from 126 to 149) from 2022 to 2023, suggesting greater awareness of the importance of interviews in solving cases.

Advances in Person Identification



In 2023, CogJus collaborated with the Santa Catarina police to revolutionize eyewitness identification practices in criminal investigations through the development of a **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Personal Identification** and

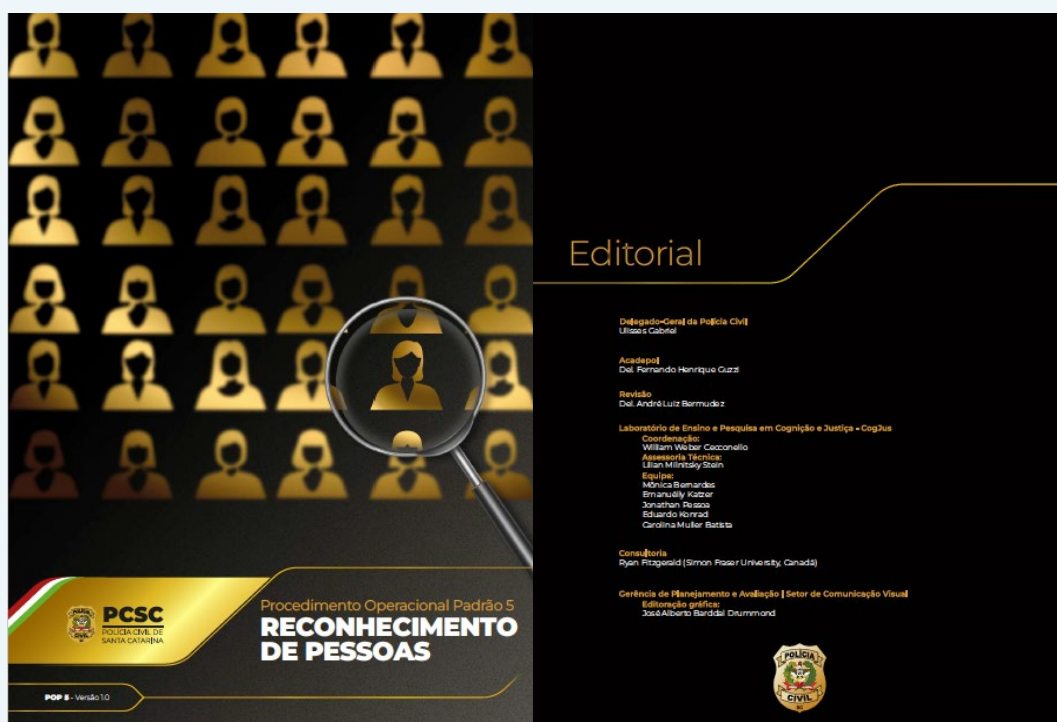
comprehensive training modules. This initiative marks a significant step in aligning police procedures with scientific recommendations for improving the accuracy and fairness of criminal justice processes.



Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Person Identification

The SOP for Person Identification was developed **to guide police officers in eyewitness identification, aiming to minimize errors and promote impartiality.** This SOP is based on legal aspects, such as articles 226, 227, and 228 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CPP), the jurisprudence of the Superior

Court of Justice (STJ) and the Federal Supreme Court (STF), as well as Resolution n. 484/2022 of the National Council of Justice (CNJ). Scientifically, it is based on Testimonial Psychology, the functioning of human memory, and the factors that influence person recognition.



The SOP details the steps of the identification procedure, including the preparation of the act by the police, the identification process, and the documentation of the procedure. For each step, it provides specific recommendations such as instructions to the identifier, presentation of the suspect, environmental conditions, and recording of the procedure, supported by scientific and legal foundations.

The SOP emphasizes open-ended questioning and free narrative by witnesses and offers detailed

instructions for recording and interacting with witnesses. Importantly, the SOP strictly **prohibits** the use of high-risk identification methods (such as showing only one person to be identified, either in person or by photo). After an extensive literature review and collaboration with experts, the SOP was officially launched in August 2023 on social media platforms and is also available upon request from CogJus.



Training in Person Identification Procedures

The training, conducted online and consisting of nine modules, covers various aspects of the identification process, from legal considerations to practical application. Scalability and Innovation: The modular and online nature of the training ensures accessibility and adaptability, highlighting

its potential for wide dissemination and impact across various regions and professional groups in Brazil. Pilot tests of the training are planned in the states of Santa Catarina, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro in 2024.



Study Group on Testimonial Psychology

- meeting with P
at 3 pm @ coffee
- marketing class
start tomorrow
- buy new camera!

The Study Group on Testimonial Psychology, an initiative of CogJus, aims to disseminate knowledge on Testimonial Psychology, **promote the exchange of experiences, and encourage the use of scientific methods** to obtain accurate

testimonies. In 2023, the group focused on the theme “Person Identification,” aiming to improve practices and minimize identification errors.



Structure and Activities

- Monthly meetings to discuss scientific articles on topics in Testimonial Psychology and their practical application with the Justice System.
- Lectures by experts in the field of Testimonial Psychology to share their knowledge and experiences.
- Publications and dissemination of materials on Testimonial Psychology for in-depth exploration of topics.



Resultados

- Engagement of 47 participants in 2023, including law and psychology students, professionals such as lawyers, psychologists, and police officers.
- Significant contribution to the dissemination of scientific knowledge and the promotion of interdisciplinary dialogue.



Impacto

- Strengthening the dialogue between public security professionals, researchers, and students.
- Promotion of fairer and more efficient judicial practices through the use of scientific approaches in testimony collection and identification.



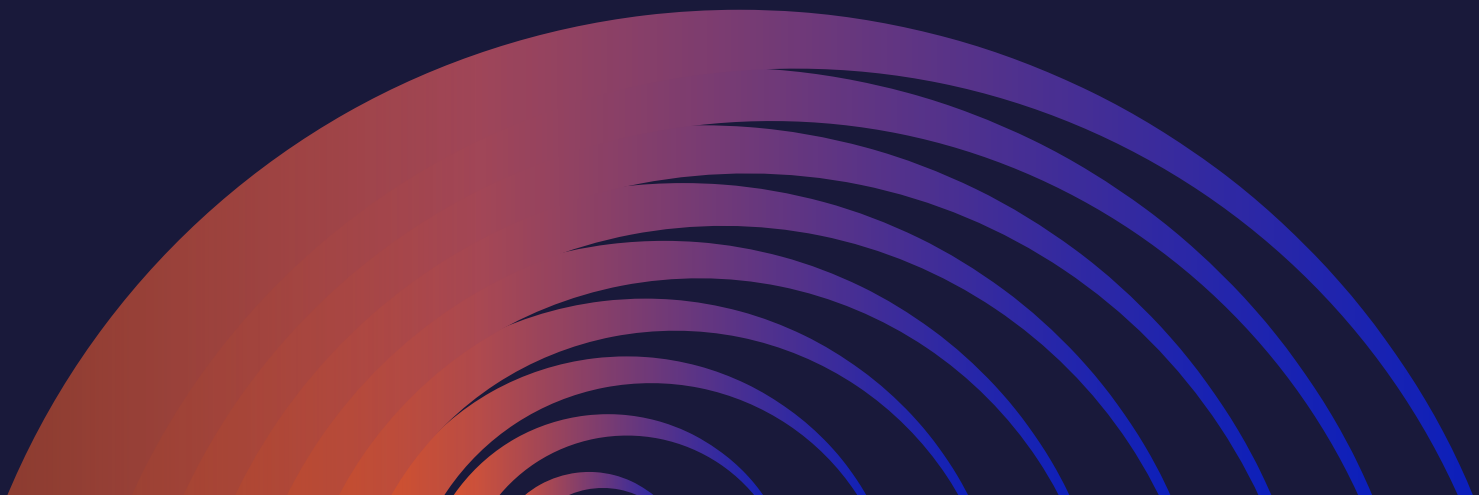
Conclusion and perspectives for the next year

2023 was a fundamental year for our laboratory, achieving significant results in terms of training, new projects and partnerships, and expanding our team. Through research and multidisciplinary collaborations, we helped disseminate scientific methods that have shown significant results for police practice.

We seek to increasingly consolidate ourselves as a reference in effective practices for hearings, interrogations, and person identification. In the coming years, we aim to assist in the implementation and development of good practices for Investigative Interviewing in Brazil, as well as in Latin America, through partnerships with institutions that aim to improve police practices worldwide, through procedures based on Science and Human Rights. Actions are planned for 2024 to maintain the Supervisory Teachers Group with a

greater number of states and people, with a commitment to seek greater gender parity. Also planned are the implementation of Investigative Interviewing and Person Identification training in conjunction with partner police academies.

The achievements of this year reflect our ongoing commitment to academic excellence and practical application, highlighting the impact CogJus has had in promoting justice and improving the involved legal systems. We will continue to actively collaborate with public institutions and professionals in the criminal justice field to adapt and implement approaches that promote more ethical, effective, and human rights-based interviews for victims, witnesses, and suspects, as well as safer and more effective approaches for conducting identifications.





Scientific Dissemination

**Our
publications**

Investigative Interview Manual for the Judiciary Police

CogJus made a practical manual for investigative interviewing available online for free, initially intended as a base material for the Initial Training in Investigative Interviewing. This resource, accessible on our website - Cogjus.com - provides scientific and ethical guidelines for conducting hearings and interrogations, with a special focus on the Civil and Federal Police. The manual aims to improve the effectiveness of investigative interviews by offering evidence-based strategies.

Rapport as a Technique for Obtaining Information in Investigative Interviews

This article reviews the scientific literature on the rapport technique in investigative interviews. It highlights the importance of establishing a positive and judgment-free relationship between interviewer and interviewee to improve information gathering from victims, witnesses, and suspects. The article

discusses the components of rapport, such as mutual attention, positivity, and coordination, and offers recommendations for practical application in the Brazilian police, based on international protocols.

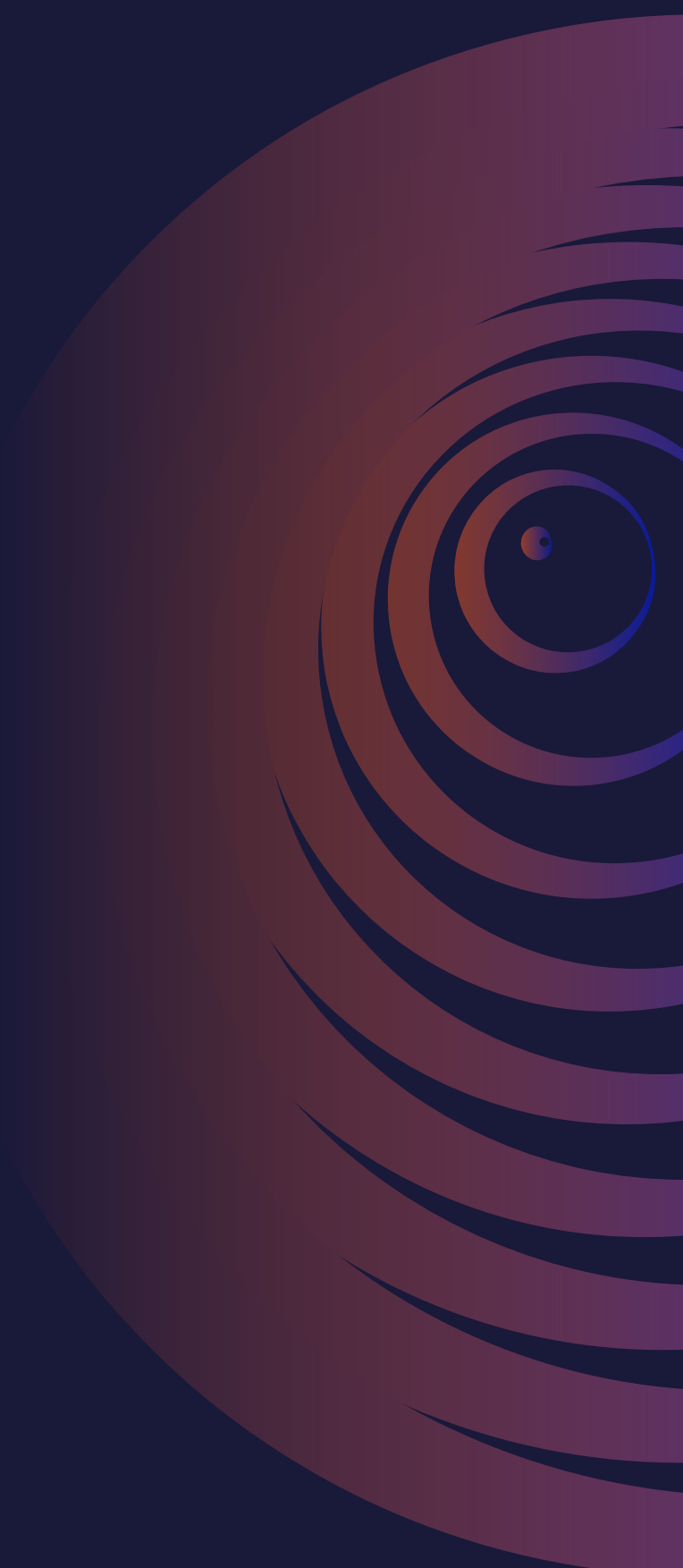
Mind the gap: Bridging evidence-based witness identification procedures to practice through police training

This study evaluated the effectiveness of the FAIR (Find a suspect, Avoiding bias, Instructing the witness, Record the procedure) training program in improving the procedures carried out by the Brazilian police for eyewitness identification. After the training, there was an increase in the correct construction of photographic line-ups and the adoption of recommended instructions before identification. The study also pointed to a reduction in non-recommended practices. Additionally, the results highlighted the need for institutional support for the effective implementation of evidence-based practices in the identification process.



Listen, Respect, Protect:
Recommendations for
Interviewing Women Victims of
Sexual Violence

This article focused on investigative interviewing applied to specific and challenging cases: sexual violence against women. The victim's word is of great relevance in these cases; however, in Brazil, there is a lack of specific recommendations. This article presents procedures to be adopted in interviews with women victims of sexual violence, such as raising awareness about rape myths, establishing rapport, recording the statement, and using free narrative and open-ended questions.



Partners



UiO : Norwegian Centre for Human Rights
University of Oslo

FUNDAÇÃO
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Our website



cogjus.com

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