



Legal Services Corporation
For 25 Years, America's
Partner For Equal Justice

Notice of Availability of Funds

Legal Services Corporation Technology Initiative Grants

2003

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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Summary

The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) issues this Notice describing the conditions under which applications will be received for Technology Initiative Grants and how LSC will determine which applications it will fund. This grant program provides an integral tool to help achieve LSC's Strategic Goals: dramatically increasing the quantity and quality of legal services provided eligible persons.¹ TIG-funded projects develop, test and replicate innovative technologies that can enable state justice communities to improve clients' access to high quality legal assistance.

Dates

Complete applications for the fiscal year 2003 LSC grant program must be mailed or hand-carried to the address indicated below and received by LSC no later than 5:00 P.M. EDT, April 30, 2003. All forms needed for the application are available online at www.lscopp.com/techsite/sitepages/grants2003.htm. In addition to hardcopy submissions, applicants are required to supply a digital (electronic) submission as set forth under *Digital (Electronic) Submissions Also Required*. A second publication, *Guidelines for Preparing Applications*, gives complete details for preparing and submitting applications, both in hardcopy form and digitally.

Addresses

Applications must be mailed or hand-delivered to:

Legal Services Corporation
Technology Initiative Grants Competition
750 First Street NE, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20002

Online Submission is Required

In addition to the physical delivery of the application, we require that the application be submitted in digital form (electronically) no later than 5:00 PM EDT, April 30, 2003. Complete instructions for this will be available by April 1, 2003, and posted on the Office of Program Performance technology website at www.lscopp.com/techsite/sitepages/grants2003.htm.

One Project Per Application

Each project for which you seek funding should be submitted in its own application. For example, do not combine a request for a statewide web site grant with a request for a grant to expand the intake system. You may submit multiple applications, but each discrete project must be submitted separately.

¹ See *LSC Strategic Directions 2000-2005*, adopted by the LSC Board in January 2000.

Evaluation

Evaluation provides an invaluable project planning and management tool. Evaluation mechanisms enable project managers to assess progress toward goals, identify design or implementation problems and make necessary adjustments. Accordingly, applicants should demonstrate that evaluation comprises an integral component of proposed projects, providing effective assessment of each project stage, from development to implementation.

All proposals should specify evaluation strategies and plans, and identify the persons who will conduct the evaluation. To insure continuity in the evaluations nationwide, LSC reserves the right to approve or disapprove of the proposed evaluation plans or evaluator(s). The TIG-funded Technology Evaluation Project (TEP) has developed evaluation tools that applicants may find useful. Information about evaluation resources can be identified through TEP as well as LStech (www.lstech.org), and NTAP (<http://ntap.lstech.org>).

Eligible Costs

If included in the approved project budget, LSC will allow costs for: personnel; fringe benefits; computer hardware, software, and other end-user equipment; telecommunication services and related equipment; consultants, evaluators, and other contractual services; travel; rental of office equipment, furniture, and space; and supplies. Administrative costs must be captured through these line items only; no general 'administrative cost' line item will be approved. All costs must be reasonable and directly related to the project.

We advise applicants to be mindful of the prior approval provisions of Regulation 1630.5 when considering the purchase of any individual item, or of a group of related items, over \$10,000 in value. In order to expedite purchases after the grant award, you may wish to include a request for prior approval in your grant application. The procedures for requesting prior approval can be found in Section 3 of the LSC Property Acquisition and Management Manual. The manual can be downloaded from the LSC website at http://www.lsc.gov/FOIA/foia_frn.htm. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Kimberly Heron in the Office of Compliance and Enforcement at 202.336.8864.

Ineligible Costs

Costs associated with the construction or major renovation of buildings are not eligible. While costs for the construction of new network facilities are eligible costs, applicants are expected to make use of existing infrastructure and commercially available telecommunications services. Only under extraordinary circumstances will the construction of new network facilities be approved.

Award Period

Applicants may propose project terms up to 36 months. Budgets submitted should be for the entire term of the project.

Incomplete Applications

All applications submitted on time will be reviewed to be sure they are complete as defined in the Guidelines. Incomplete applications will not be considered in the selection process. LSC may

contact applicants to notify them of deficiencies or omissions in applications and allow additional material to be submitted, but is not required to do so. The only way to ensure that the application is considered is to timely submit a complete application.

Selection Process

LSC will publish a notice in the Technology Section of the LSC Recipient Information Network (RIN) web site listing all properly completed applications received by LSC. Listing an application in such a notice merely acknowledges receipt of an application that will compete for funding with other applications. Publication does not preclude subsequent return or disapproval of the application, nor does it ensure that the application will be funded. The selection process will last approximately four months and involves four stages:

1. During the first stage, each eligible application will be reviewed by LSC staff and/or a panel of outside readers who have demonstrated expertise in both the programmatic and technological aspects of the application. The staff and/or review panels will evaluate applications according to the review criteria provided in this Notice and make non-binding written recommendations to the LSC Director of Program Performance. These recommendations may include the suggestion that grants only be approved after substantial modification, improvement, or narrowing of the proposal.

2. Upon completion of the initial review process, LSC staff will analyze applications as necessary. Staff analysis will be based on the degree to which a proposed project meets the program's funding scope, the eligibility of costs included in an application's budget, and the extent to which an application complements or duplicates projects previously funded or under consideration by LSC or other federal programs. These analyses may include the suggestion that grants only be approved after substantial modification, improvement, or narrowing of the proposal. The analysis of program staff will be provided to the LSC Director of Program Performance in writing.

The LSC Director of Program Performance will then prepare and present a slate of recommended grant awards to the Vice President for Programs for review and approval. The Director's recommendations and review and approval will take into account the following selection factors:

- a. evaluations of the outside reviewers;
- b. analysis of program staff;
- c. degree to which the proposed grants meet the program's priorities as described in the section entitled "Grant Categories;"
- d. geographic distribution of the proposed grant awards;
- e. variety of technologies and strategies employed by the proposed grant awards;
- f. extent to which the proposed grant awards represent a reasonable distribution of funds across application areas;
- g. preference will be given to qualified and competitive applications from states that have not received a TIG grant;
- h. promotion of access to and use of the information infrastructure by rural communities and other underserved groups;

- i. avoidance of redundancy and conflicts with the initiatives of other federal agencies; and
- j. availability of funds; and
- k. state planning.

These recommendations may include the suggestion that grants only be approved after substantial modification, improvement, or narrowing of the proposal.

3. The Vice President for Programs will then prepare a final list of recommendations that will be presented to the President of LSC. The LSC President selects the applications to be negotiated for possible grant award taking into consideration the Vice President's of Programs recommendations and the degree to which the slate of applications, taken as a whole, satisfies the selection factors described above and the program's stated purposes as set forth in the section entitled *Program Purposes*.

4. After applications have been selected in this manner, negotiations will take place between LSC staff and the applicant. These negotiations are intended to resolve any differences that exist between the applicant's original request and what LSC proposes to fund, and if necessary, to clarify items in the application. Not all applicants who are contacted for negotiation will necessarily receive a grant. Final selections made by the President will be based to some extent upon the recommendations by the Director and the Vice President of programs and the degree to which the slate of applications, taken as a whole, satisfies the program's stated purposes as set forth in the section entitled *Program Purposes*, upon the conclusion of negotiations.

Use of Program Income

Applicants are advised that any program income generated by a proposed project is subject to special conditions. Program income is defined as gross income earned by the recipient that is either directly generated by a supported activity, or earned as a result of the award. Anticipated program income must be documented appropriately in the project budget and, should an application be funded, said program income must be reported to LSC. In addition, should an application be funded, unanticipated program income must be reported to LSC, and the budget for the project must be renegotiated to reflect receipt of this program income. If you anticipate program income to continue after the term of the project, please indicate this and describe how this income will be spent.

Waiver Authority

It is the general intent of LSC not to waive any of the provisions set forth in this Notice. However, under extraordinary circumstances and when it is in the best interest of our targeted client community, LSC, upon its own initiative or when requested, may waive the provisions in this Notice. Waivers may only be granted for requirements that are discretionary and not mandated by statute or regulation. Any request for a waiver must set forth the extraordinary circumstances for the request and be included in the application or sent to the address provided in the *Addresses* section above. LSC will not consider a request to waive the deadline for an application unless the waiver request is received by LSC prior to the application deadline.

Program Purposes

TIG grants are intended to improve access to justice and to legal information for our targeted client community. They have been divided into six broad areas that are fully described in the *Grant Categories* section below. It is LSC's goal that 100% of our targeted client community has access to legal assistance. To accomplish this objective, LSC will provide grants to our existing program grantees to promote full access and high-quality legal representation through the use of technology.

Applicable Law

All grants made pursuant to this solicitation will be subject to the LSC Act of 1974, as amended, applicable appropriations acts, and all lawful requirements of the rules, regulations, policies, guidelines, instructions, and other directives of LSC. Any amendments or other applicable laws or LSC regulations adopted during the period of this grant shall also apply.

The LSC Act, as amended, can be found at 42 U.S.C. §2996 *et seq.* Pub. L. 107-77 contains the FY 2002 LSC appropriation. It incorporates the restrictions imposed on recipients of LSC funds by Pub. L. 105-119 and Pub. L. 104-134, the FY 1998 and 1996 LSC appropriations. LSC expects that its FY 2003 appropriation will do the same. The LSC regulations can be found at 45 C.F.R. Part 1600 *et seq.* Please see the Federal Register for any regulations that have been revised or promulgated since the last publication of the Code of Federal Regulations. The LSC regulation on competitive bidding for grants and contracts can be found at 45 C.F.R. Part 1634.

The LSC Act, applicable laws and regulations can also be found at www.lsc.gov.

Funding Availability

Approximately \$3.4 million will be available for this program. Based on the response to last year's Technology Initiative Grants Notice, LSC expects this year's grant round to be very competitive.

Eligible Organizations

TIG grants are available to existing LSC program grantees only. Although other entities are not eligible to apply, they are encouraged to participate as project partners. Costs borne by other entities may be included in project budgets and will be credited as additional funds for extra points, as explained in *Review Criteria*.

Additional Funds

Applicants are strongly encouraged to seek additional support for projects by partnering with LSC grantees as well as other organizations. Applications that have commitments for additional funds will receive extra points in the review process as more fully explained in the section *Review Criteria*.

There are a few TIG grant categories that require matching funds. If a grant requires matching funds, it will be indicated in the category description. Matching funds can come from the applying program, partner organizations or other funders.

LSC funds can be used by LSC recipients as matching funds for grants received through the Department of Commerce Technology Opportunities Program (TOP) subject to written approval from TOP (or the Department of Commerce) for the use of LSC funds for TOP matching purposes.

Completeness of Application

LSC will initially review all applications to determine whether all required elements are present and clearly identifiable. The required elements are listed and described in the *Guidelines for Preparing Applications*. Each of the required elements must be present and clearly identified. Failure to do so may result in rejection of the application.

Application Deadline

As noted above, complete applications for the Technology Initiative Grants must be received by LSC no later than 5:00 P.M. EDT, April 30, 2003. Instructions for the hard copy and electronic submission procedures are located in the *Guidelines for Preparing Applications*. LSC anticipates that it will take approximately four months to complete the review of applications and make final funding decisions.

Grant Categories

LSC supports projects that can serve as models for other LSC and non-LSC legal services providers. Every funded project should demonstrate the use of technology to achieve our Strategic Goals, which are to dramatically increase the provision of legal services to eligible persons and to ensure that eligible clients are receiving appropriate and high-quality legal assistance.

The LSC Technology Initiative Grants program emphasizes the application of technology to meet the needs of clients and others seeking pro se and legal information, not simply technology as an end in itself. Therefore, each project should: identify specific problems or needs in a community; offer uses of technology that provide concrete solutions and produce measurable outcomes; and be built in such a way that the project can be exported to other jurisdictions at minimal cost. LSC expects any expertise gained or product created will be shared with other programs to the extent practical, so that the community as a whole benefits from each Technology Initiative Grant awarded. This principle can best be summed up as “All boats will rise” – the idea being that every improvement made to the system shall benefit – in the most practical way possible – the entire system.

LSC expects any funded project to be executed in a manner that is fully compatible with data and legal information standards that may emerge from the legal services community.

Projects are expected to apply technology creatively and, in so doing, bring about meaningful changes in how legal services are provided and in the relationships between an organization and its partners and clients.

Descriptions of successful projects from prior grant cycles can be found at www.lstech.org. **In FY 2003, LSC will support projects in six application categories as set out below:**

1. Statewide Technology (Requires Matching Funds)

This category will provide matching funds that support the hiring of a statewide technology specialist for one year. This is a full-time position that focuses solely on statewide technology. It is targeted to state justice communities that currently lack a comprehensive and cohesive technology plan. It is expected that programs in this category have recognized the value and need for a common plan and the shared use of technology, but lack the resources and/or the staff expertise to begin the planning process. Applicants in this category can be a program in a multiple program state or a single statewide program.

Before applying in this category, programs should garner the support and input from all LSC-funded programs in their state and as many other stakeholders as practical – court systems and individuals, other legal service providers, social service providers, client groups, community organizations, bar associations and private attorneys. Each LSC-funded program within the state must agree to adopt and implement the plan once it has been created. This agreement shall be provided in writing per the application. Applications with significant participation from all stakeholders in the state justice community will receive more favorable consideration than applications that lack such participation.

Applications that contain descriptions for sustaining Technology Plan implementations after the initial grant is completed will receive more favorable consideration than applications that fail to address these issues.

The primary responsibility of the statewide technology specialist will be to assist the state justice community with the creation of a statewide technology plan. Plans created by these grants should contain the following components:

1. An Office-by-Office Inventory of all current hardware/software systems within the state
2. A Vendor Resource Assessment that describes the kind and type of services available within the state
3. A Statewide Technology Topology – a diagram that illustrates the extent to which the systems contemplated by the plan would be integrated.
4. A Client Scenario – a proposed description of how a client would navigate through the system once the technology plan was implemented.
5. A Technology Plan – a detailed, comprehensive description of the specific solutions proposed

The maximum award in this category is \$70,000. Up to \$45,000 of the award should be used to cover no more than 50% of the personnel costs for one full-time staff person, dedicated to statewide technology, for one year including fringe benefits. Programs may use non-TIG funds to increase compensation amounts. Up to \$25,000 may be used to cover the cost of travel, computing equipment, miscellaneous supplies, and any administrative overhead.

2. State Plan Implementation

This category is to provide funding for significant infrastructure implementations and/or upgrades. These upgrades can stem from needs based on program mergers, program reconfigurations, documented cost savings to multiple programs supporting a shared infrastructure, or recognition that significant additional technical capacity will result in significant additional service to clients. Two categories are described below.

Mergers/Reconfiguration – When two or more programs merge into a new, larger, program there are often substantial differences in the technological systems between programs requiring changes in order to successfully integrate the systems. Or, the merging programs may identify an opportunity to adopt a newer more cost effective system, electing a radical change versus an incremental one. This category seeks to address these needs.

Simply engaging in a merger or reconfiguration does not guarantee TIG funding. Applications in this area will fully document how the state plan will ultimately increase quality and quantity of service to clients. An application that is based on a thorough and comprehensive Technology Plan which addresses implementation and a sustainable future will receive more favorable consideration (for additional information on Technology Plans, please see the section – Statewide Technology Planning).

Recognition that significant additional technical capacity will result in significant additional service to our clients – Infrastructure systems can provide or improve upon the delivery of service to clients. One example might be remote intake, brief advice and referral – using a web

based intake/case management system it is possible for a mobile and remote attorney to provide service to income eligible clients from anywhere there is an Internet connection. Applications in this area will clearly demonstrate how a technology or new technological capacity would directly and significantly impact our client population. Applications that clearly illustrate how these systems will be sustained after the grant period will receive more favorable consideration.

Areas of consideration include:

- Centralized intake, brief advice and referral systems
- Regional or Statewide Case Management Systems
- Regional or Statewide Desktop Productivity Tools Delivery Systems
- Other implementation of a Coordinated Statewide Technology Plan

In large states where state planning has designated planning regions, those regions may apply in this category. The plan must be approved by the designated state planning body.

This grant category has a maximum award of \$300,000.

3. Pro Se

This category addresses applications aimed at the delivery of legal services and information to pro se litigants through the use of technology systems. These projects can be small, thoughtful pilots of new and innovative ideas for how to deliver a range of services to low income and vulnerable populations. Development or replication of existing pro se solutions will also be considered.

Applicants should demonstrate how an innovation could be replicated throughout the legal services and/or service provider community. This is more significant than the ability of another program to implement a similar project, but rather how the national adoption of an application's idea would result in positive change that might far exceed the original anticipated impact.

Applicants shall concisely illustrate how this project will benefit pro se litigants. Applications with broad support from the state's equal justice community, especially the court system, will receive more favorable consideration.

Areas of Consideration include:

- Technology systems that provide legal information and support to pro se litigants
- Technology systems that support pro bono attorney participation in pro se
- Technology systems that target hard-to-reach and underserved populations

This grant category has a maximum award of \$175,000.

4. Access Projects

This category supports projects to address the range of access barriers that limit clients' ability to use the many technologies now being implemented to improve the delivery of legal services to the poor. These barriers undermine the overall effectiveness of the delivery system and prevent legal services providers from fully realizing the potential returns on their technology investments. LSC seeks proposals to address barriers related to:

- Availability
- Outreach and Assistance
- Literacy
- Language
- The Needs of Individuals with Disabilities

LSC will fund two types of projects in this category: support for a state **technology advocate** and the development of **templates**.

A. State Technology Advocate. LSC will consider applications to support a state technology advocate who would (1) identify barriers that limit clients' access to programs' technology tools within their state and (2) develop strategic partnerships with client communities and others to overcome the identified barriers. Essentially, this position should increase access points for low income people and ensure that clients and other groups serving clients are aware of and able to use the technology tools now being developed and implemented in the legal services community. In addition to addressing the access barriers in the state, the grant in this category are designed to increase the legal services community's understanding of access barriers and ways to overcome them.

The application must clearly demonstrate that this position will serve all LSC funded programs within a state and help create sustainable access points and tools once TIG funding for the position has been depleted.

This grant will fund this position for two years. The maximum funding amount for a technology advocate grant is \$125,000. The maximum amount for compensation will be \$50,000 per year including benefits. The remaining \$25,000 must be used for computing equipment for the advocate, travel for the advocate, and other support. Programs may use non-TIG funds to increase compensation amounts. The applicant must commit to hiring an advocate who is representative of the diversity within the service area and/or who can successfully reach out to special populations.

The technology advocate must address at least two of the following access barriers.

- **Availability.** Libraries, community technology centers, social services providers, and state justice community partners offer low income people access to computers and Internet services. Projects addressing this barrier should expand existing efforts.

The Technology Advocate might address this barrier by developing partnerships that significantly increase:

1. The geographic locations with computers that provide clients with access to the Internet
2. The number of computers with Internet access
3. The times (e.g., nights, weekends) when clients can use computers
4. The number of access points available to limited English proficient clients

- **Outreach and assistance.** Many disadvantaged people are hesitant, unwilling or unable to effectively use computer-related technologies. This category strives to ensure that the technology tools respond most effectively to the needs of client communities.

The Technology Advocate might spearhead the following types of projects:

1. Provide clients with on-line training and support
 2. Provide effective and responsive personal training, mentoring and support
 3. Ensure clients can use computers, Internet, Web, kiosk and related technologies
 4. Support, training and mentoring for persons with limited literacy and limited English proficiency
- **The Needs of Disabled Individuals.** Technology tools developed and used by TIG grantees must address the needs of disabled individuals, in particular barriers such as those confronting individuals with significant hearing or sight impairments, restricted mobility or who have difficulty typing or using a mouse.

To address these barriers, a Technology Advocate might implement collaborations with disability groups and other organizations to:

1. Improve outreach and broaden the reach of technology tools among disabled people
2. Provide persons with disabilities with support, training and mentoring
3. Ensure persons with disabilities can use computers
4. Develop low-cost strategies to effectively incorporate the use of assistive technologies

B. Development of System Enhancements

LSC will fund one or more projects to develop system enhancements for websites and other technology tools that increase access for clients with limited literacy and / or limited English proficiency. The system enhancements should build on and adapt for a legal services context systems and materials that have been developed for other environments. Finally, successful projects will develop system enhancements that can be cost-effectively adapted and implemented by legal services grantees and their state justice community partners across the country.

Projects should focus on one or more of the following barriers:

- **Literacy.** Reading experts emphasize that community education and website materials should be developed at a fifth grade reading level or below.

Templates to address literacy barriers should include:

1. Legal information materials at a fifth grade reading level
2. Legal information materials in multimedia formats (e.g., pictures, video, verbal instructions) that complement textual information
3. Multimedia tutorials for online use that explain how to utilize and benefit from these technologies.

- **Language.** Some 45 million Americans do not speak English at home, and over 28 million are foreign-born.

Templates to address language barriers should include:

1. Accurate, understandable legal information in the native languages of major client groups
 2. Legal information materials in multimedia formats (e.g., pictures, video, verbal instructions) using the native languages of major clients groups
 3. Multimedia tutorials using the native languages of major clients groups for online use.
- **The Needs of Individuals with Disabilities.** For many persons with disabilities, the Internet is potentially of great assistance in that it does not present the physical barriers that the brick and mortar world does. In order to fulfill this promise, it is crucial that TIG grantees develop technology tools to respond to the specific needs of persons with disabilities.

Templates to maximize usability for clients with disabilities should:

1. Provide materials in formats most responsive to the needs of persons with different types of disabilities
2. Identify effective and efficient strategies for incorporating the use of assistive technologies into Websites, kiosks, and work stations

This category has a maximum grant award of \$175,000.

5. Statewide Web Sites

A. New Web Sites

In the 2000 round of TIG grants, LSC funded projects to develop web templates that could serve as patterns for statewide web sites. We want to encourage states to implement one of these two templates. LSC will accept applications in this area for up to \$50,000. We anticipate that the actual implementation of the statewide web site from one of these templates will cost no more than \$10,000, leaving up to \$40,000 for providing content for the web site and securing a coordinator responsible for implementation. Applications for such implementation must clearly demonstrate that the web site will serve the entire state, with all LSC programs participating. Applications must include: the identification of the template selected, with an explanation of why that template best meets the needs of the state; details on how the state will provide personnel with the technical expertise to implement and maintain the template selected; and a detailed plan describing how the web site will be maintained and updated during the implementation and after the term of the LSC grant. This plan must be for a complete web site, including portions for clients, advocates, pro bono attorneys, and providers of other legal and social services in the state. We cannot guarantee the possibility of additional funds for recipients of first-time TIG 2003 grants.

Note: There is one major difference between the Kaivo and ProBono.Net templates. States utilizing the Kaivo template can run the web site on their own server or have it hosted for

them. They need in-house expertise to design and maintain the site. This gives states more flexibility to tailor websites to meet their particular needs, but increases their financial costs. In contrast, the ProBono.Net websites are all housed on a single server following a nonprofit ASP type model. This template requires relatively little in-house staffing to develop and maintain the site. While it affords less flexibility for an individual state to modify the system to address its own needs, it is designed to ensure that enhancements can be readily transferred to and adopted by user states. State planners must weigh the relative costs and benefits of this staffing/flexibility trade-off in making their website template selection. To view a sample Kaivo template go to <http://www.kaivo.com/TIG> and for Probono.net go to <http://www.lawhelp.org/ny>.

Maximum grant amount in this category is \$50,000.

B. Renewal Web Sites

Recipients of TIG 2001 or 2002 statewide web site grants who have not already received a renewal grant, and who have completed, reported on and been approved by LSC for successful achievement of their milestones through the third quarter by April 30th, 2003, may apply for additional funding up to \$25,000. It is important that these web sites and the position of web content coordinator continue after the grant term. LSC recognizes that finding the funds to sustain them might take more than one year, so is offering this opportunity for additional funding. However, this does not mean awarding additional funding will be pro forma. In looking at applications for requests of additional funding, it will be imperative that they include a workable plan to sustain both the web site and the staff to manage content on the site after the end of the grant(s).

Maximum grant amount in this category is \$25,000.

C. Third Year Web Site Funding

Recipients of TIG 2000 or 2001 statewide web site grants, who have received a renewal web site grant in 2002, and who have completed, reported on and been approved by LSC for successful achievement of their first quarter milestones by April 30th, 2003, may apply for additional funding up to \$25,000. This funding will not begin until after the 2002 renewal grant has been completed and will be for a grant term of twenty-four months. Funds are contingent on the following: a two year commitment of website hosting by a provider, ongoing in-house content development, management and upgrades and for continued outreach and sustainability efforts.

Maximum grant amount in this category is \$25,000 for twenty-four months.

D. Pro Se Forms (Matching Funds Required for Option One)

Building document assembly capability onto a state-wide web site or kiosk offers the promise of allowing users to fill-in information and create complete documents such as pro se pleadings. Currently, LSC is implementing a project to make HotDocs document assembly software (see www.lstech.org for a project description of HotDocs) available on every LSC funded statewide web site. This project is supported by a generous donation from Lexis-Nexis and the cooperation of many LSC grantees.

To ensure that content and automated forms are developed, this grant category will fund creation of these forms for pro se and assisted pro se representation. Recipients of a LSC funded statewide web site grant, who have completed, reported on and been approved by LSC for successful achievement of their first year milestones by April 30th, 2003 and who use the PBN or Kaivo template, may apply for a grant to produce HotDocs automated forms. All funding on this grant must support the creation of forms. These grants may take one of two structures:

1. Funding for a staff person:

Maximum grant amount \$30,000.00 allocated as follows:

Up to \$5,000 available for training, equipment, and office costs

Up to \$25,000 for salary and benefits of the employee

Note: Requires fifty percent match from program, must be a full time position for one year with no other duties.

2. Funding to contract development of templates:

Maximum grant amount \$30,000

Note: Must be contracted to an approved HotDocs template developer.

Both grants will require:

- Prioritization of areas of law for the forms by statewide web site stakeholders committee
- A plan for choosing which forms or pleadings will be converted to HotDocs
- LSC TIG staff approval of the plan
- Execution of the plan so that forms are ready for conversion to HotDocs
- Grantees in this category will not receive payments until the forms are identified, agreed upon, and ready to be automated. Unlike other TIG grants, an initial payment will not be disbursed until the first set of milestones are fully met.

6. Special Projects

A. Integrated Intake System

Last year LSC issued Program Letter 02-4, *Characteristics of a Telephone Intake, Advice and Referral System* addressing the hotline component of intake. For the past three years, LSC has been giving technology grants to build statewide web sites, improve case management systems, and upgrade and augment telephone systems to increase access for clients.

This category is for grants that will combine hotlines and web sites into an integrated system, one that is seamless to clients, enabling clients to access the program via the programs website or a telephone hotline. This project should be a regional or statewide demonstration project. The successful applicant will have a hotline that provides program-wide intake and also have a statewide website. Applicants may propose their own plan for integration, but sample workflow might be the following:

- User of web site who still requires assistance has a help button to contact hotline
- User can complete online eligibility form that is available to hotline staff
- User will be able to specify language and legal problem, with notes on problem

- User will be able to converse with hotline staff either by phone or by online chat
- If no hotline staff is available, user will be placed in queue or leave call back information
- Information provided by the user will flow into the case management eliminating manual data entry

This grant is specifically for the technology to integrate telephone intake with the web site and technical staff to support it. It will not support salaries for intake staff.

The maximum grant amount for this category is \$150,000.

B. E-Filing

Across the county, efforts are under way to implement e-filing – the electronic filing of court documents. As we work to insure 100% access for our client community, e-filing has the potential to increase access, but programs need to be stakeholders in this process. As web and kiosk based systems are developed to prepare court documents, we need to be sure that these documents can be electronically filed just as pleadings are from law firms.

This grant category is to fund projects that improve client access via e-filing. Areas of consideration are:

- Working with the Courts to add e-filing capability to statewide web sites
- Working with the Courts to be sure any e-filing projects are user friendly for self represented litigants, including the design of the e-filing interface and providing email capabilities for SRL's
- Working with the Courts to be sure e-filing does not create barriers to access.

The maximum amount for this grant category is \$150,000

C. Website Sustainability Research Project

LSC began funding statewide web site templates in 2000. The web sites are becoming a critical instrument in the delivery of legal services to clients. Through the use of the web site, programs can provide public legal education, eligibility screening, intake, pro se forms and much more to clients – increasing their access to justice. The web sites are also invaluable to advocates and law students who access the site for online brief banks, referrals, best practices, case management systems, PAI recruitment, etc. And the state justice community and partnering social service providers benefit from shared resources and the ability to provide comprehensive service to clients.

Locating the numerous funding sources available and creatively developing and maximizing the web sites capacity to generate revenue by attracting and retaining funding from corporations, foundations and other private sources and community partners is difficult. LSC is interested in funding a study that will identify the various revenue sources potentially available for technology and specific tools and methods that executive directors, development directors and communication managers can implement to sustain their statewide web sites.

This study should identify resources and practices that can be shared with all programs to continue the comprehensive delivery of quality legal services through the use of web sites.

The maximum amount for this grant category is \$50,000.

D. Technology as a Management Tool Research and Demonstration Project

Technology provides many tools to improve program management. LSC is looking for a study to identify the different ways that technology can assist, executive directors, project directors, board members or managing attorneys.

Areas of consideration include:

- Case management systems (CMS) contain information that can aid in legal work supervision. For example, a report that lists all open cases in which there has been no time entered, nothing docketed, and no notes entered in the past sixty days is an effective way to prevent stale cases. A grant in this category could develop a list of such reports and explain how to use them.
- Coupling CMS with mapping tools provides an effective way of identifying underserved areas or populations. This study could explain how inexpensive mapping software can be used to develop a tutorial on how to implement mapping in the typical legal services program.
- Video conferencing can be used to conduct staff meetings for geographically remote offices, to conduct case reviews and training. Web conference centers, such as LegalMeetings.org, can be an effective tool for these activities.

These are just some examples. LSC hopes to fund this study so that what is learned can be shared with all programs to help continue to improve the quality of legal services.

The maximum grant amount in this category is \$75,000.

E. Training and Technical Assistance

This category is for applications to provide the legal services community on training or technical assistance to use technology in new and innovative ways. These projects should also aim to provide support to a large portion of the national community not just to their own program. Small, pilot projects that aim to serve a region instead of the entire community will be considered. However, regional projects must clearly demonstrate how –if successful – subsequent implementations could expand the coverage to include the entire community. Applicants proposing to make use of technology for other training purposes may also apply in this category.

Applications in this category should recognize existing support systems and seek to integrate with existing providers and avoid duplication of efforts and services.

Areas of Consideration include:

- Technology skills training for technologists and/or legal services staff and advocates
- Other training for staff and advocates
- Circuit Riders
- Assistance in the development and maintenance of technical expertise in legal services programs

The maximum grant award in this category is \$150,000.00

Guidance for Applicants

Elements of a Successful Application:

- **Partnerships.** LSC encourages projects that are partnerships with bar associations, client groups, community organizations, libraries, senior organizations, state and local bar systems and advocacy organizations in these endeavors. Applicants should have the support of designated state planning bodies.
- **An achievable and practical plan.** Applicants should focus on four issues related to feasibility: (1) the technical approach; (2) the qualifications of the project staff plus any outside contractors or developers; (3) the proposed budget and the implementation schedule; and (4) the applicant's plan for sustaining the project beyond the grant period. In assessing technological approach, reviewers will examine how the proposed system would be built and how it would work, how it would operate with other systems, technological alternatives that have been considered, designs for system maintenance, periodic upgrades, and the system's adaptability to unforeseen developments. Applicants are expected to make use of existing infrastructure and commercially available telecommunications services, unless extraordinary circumstances require the construction of new network facilities.
- **An innovative approach with the potential to be replicated broadly throughout the country.** LSC expects that each awarded project will serve as a model for other communities to follow. In addition, since these grants are being provided to improve the delivery of legal services using technology, applications shall benefit – in the most practical way possible – the entire system. Applications will be scored according to how the project will benefit clients in specific localities, and also on how the project will improve the system as a whole.
- **Available resources.** In assessing the qualifications of the project team, reviewers will assess the extent to which the applicant and its partners have the resources, expertise, and experience necessary to undertake, evaluate, and complete the project and disseminate results within the proposed period.
- **A realistic budget.** The applicants proposed budget should be appropriate to the tasks proposed, sufficiently detailed so that reviewers can easily understand the relationship of items in the budget to the project narrative, and sufficiently flexible so that it can be modified to reflect changes in technology and opportunity. Reviewers also will assess the degree to which the implementation process as a whole is comprehensive and reasonable.
- **A sustainable design.** Applicants should address the potential long-term viability of the project. Reviewers will consider the economic circumstances of the community or communities to be served by the proposed project and the applicant's strategies to sustain the project after the completion of the grant.

Major Reasons Proposed Projects Have Not Been Funded:

Unsuccessful applicants for TIG grants did not receive funding for one or more of several different reasons. The factors that most often accounted for this lack of success included the following:

- **Competition for limited resources.** Requests for TIG funding are far greater than the funds available. In 2000, TIG applicants requested \$14.9 million when available funds totaled \$4.2 million. In 2001, applicants requested \$20.4 million when \$6.9 million was available. And in 2002, \$12.5 million was requested when only \$4.5 million was available. In this situation, many proposals, even some with significant merit, will not be successful. LSC funded the projects that the review committees deemed the strongest and that staff concluded would be most likely to achieve TIG's objectives.
- **Failure to specify how the proposed project would improve services to clients.** LSC received many unsuccessful applications that proposed to use available technologies in creative and interesting ways. However, these proposals did not answer the most important question: how will the proposed project improve the quality and /or quantity of services provided to eligible clients?
- **Lack of state coordination.** Some applicants failed to address another basic criterion: effectively strengthening state delivery systems. Some proposed projects focused solely on the needs of individual programs. Others revealed the absence of essential coordination and cooperation within a state. For example, LSC received applications from three different programs within a single state. Each of these applicants asserted that their project was part of a statewide initiative supported by all the LSC grantees in the state. None of these applications made any mention of the other proposed projects.
- **Unwarranted requests for staff support.** Many unsuccessful applicants sought TIG funding to support on-going staffing associated with existing systems. TIG does not support basic staffing. Instead, TIG grants fund staffing needed to develop and implement innovative technology initiatives and/or new systems that markedly expand the quality and quantity of services provided clients. Program funding for staffing is limited to short-term support required to implement the new initiatives. Once the new system is implemented, grantees are expected to fund necessary ongoing activities with funds from their basic field grant or other sources.
- **Duplication of other initiatives.** Many applications, even some with considerable merit, were not funded because they were for projects that were the same as or quite similar to projects already being funded through TIG.
- **Inadequate planning and preparation or unrealistic goals.** Some unsuccessful applications failed to demonstrate requisite knowledge or preparation of the project they proposed. This shortcoming took various forms: insufficient knowledge of the costs and capacities of the necessary hardware or software; lack of awareness of the needed staffing

expertise; inadequate arrangements with important partnerships; or unrealistic budgeting. Some applicants also sought goals that were unrealistic given the proposed project's activities and staffing.

- **Absence of innovation.** Numerous applicants did not address the TIG program's fundamental goal: developing or implementing innovations and improvements in their electronic technology systems with the potential to markedly expand the quality and quantity of service to clients. Instead, they sought funding to meet basic technology needs that should be funded through the basic field grant or other sources.

Review Criteria

Reviewers will evaluate and rate each application using the following criteria. The relative weights of each criterion are identified in parentheses.

1. Impact for Clients (30%)

The strategic goal of the TIG program is to improve access to legal services or legal information for our client community. First and foremost, the application must demonstrate how the project will do this. The application should describe how the project will impact clients. For example, where a program proposes installation of a more advanced wide area network, the application will not be successful unless it demonstrates how the project will serve more clients or improve quality of service. Reviewers will examine the degree to which the applicant clearly: defines the problem (or deficiency) within the current delivery system; proposes creative and practical means of addressing the problem or deficiency employing technology; and identifies anticipated outcomes and potential impacts, for our client community, that are both realistic and measurable.

2. State Justice Communities (25%)

As it relates to the development of state justice communities, each application will be rated on how well the proposed project makes use of and includes broad participation from stakeholders throughout the state justice community. Each state has a designated state planning body in place to help them devise a statewide, integrated delivery system providing full access to legal services. Given that, most favorable consideration will be given to applications that can clearly demonstrate the participation of a variety of state justice stakeholders in the development and implementation of the proposed project. This includes but is not limited to: court systems, bar associations, client groups, community organizations, public and non-profit social service agencies, and non-LSC funded legal services providers.

Technology Initiative Grants should reflect the best collaborative and coordinated work the community can put together. TIG applications should be supported by the statewide technology plan and should intend to implement, expand, or enhance that framework already clearly articulated by the statewide technology plan.

Applicants are encouraged to work with other programs in their state that are also implementing TIG projects. A clear signal to reviewers that statewide planning was not considered is receipt of multiple applications from a single state that do not identify or acknowledge the existence of sister applications. Reviewers will negatively evaluate applications that acknowledge and possibly support sister applications when it is clear each program has agreed to move their own solution forward without considering the long term implications of maintaining multiple systems. Essentially this strategy communicates that the current statewide technology plan is “every program for itself.” The TIG program seeks to maximize cost effectiveness wherever possible and applications for duplicative systems will not be favorably considered.

3. Replication Potential (15%)

The innovations and approaches to be demonstrated in any proposed project should contain the potential to be replicated broadly throughout the country. LSC expects that each awarded project will serve as a model for other communities to follow. In addition, because these grants are being

provided to improve the delivery of legal services using technology, successful applications shall benefit – in the most practical way possible – the entire system. You will be scored not only on how your project will benefit clients in your locality, but on how your project will be able to improve the system as a whole.

To assess this potential for replication and improvement of the system, reviewers will consider six factors:

- a. degree to which the problem identified by the applicant is commonly found in the legal services recipients' environment;
- b. relative advantage of the project's innovations over established approaches to addressing the specified problems;
- c. ease of replication and adaptation, based on considerations such as cost and complexity, including the applicant's plans to build the innovation in such a way that it can be directly used in other jurisdictions, or can be modified at low cost for use in other jurisdictions;
- d. extent to which standard tools and software have been used;
- e. extent to which the project improves, as cost effectively as possible, the capacity of the system to deliver legal services in areas outside that of the applicant; and
- f. applicant's plans to disseminate actively the knowledge gained from the project's successes and failures.

Any product or software program developed with these grants should provide that the ownership of the product or software will vest in LSC or can be licensed for modification and/or use by other LSC programs for little or no charge (including access to development tools). It is not LSC's intent to help private companies develop products with LSC money, only to have those companies then market these products to other LSC programs at or near the cost for the original development.

4. Improving Client Access to Technology (15%)

Reviewers will assess the degree to which each application addresses barriers that limit a community or group's access to legal assistance, legal information, and the courts. These barriers may be technological, geographic, economic, physical, language, or cultural. Applications should demonstrate clearly how they will address:

- a. The limitations on client access to technological tools resulting from their geographic isolation in rural areas;
- b. The barriers clients face in urban areas because inadequate resources prevent them from having computers and Internet access at home and alternate sites to use computers and access the Internet are not available in their neighborhoods or at times they can use them;
- c. Clients' inability to use technological tools because of their limited literacy or limited English proficiency;
- d. Clients' limited ability to use technological tools because of their insufficient skills, knowledge, confidence, or support; and,

- e. The need of persons with disabilities' for interfaces to facilitate their use of the information infrastructure.

Reviewers will assess evidence of the specific access barrier(s) addressed and the viability and likely effectiveness of the proposed strategies to overcome those barriers. As part of this assessment, reviewers will consider input provided by the client community and groups serving clients in identifying the barriers and developing the strategies to address them. Reviewers will consider the degree of attention paid to the particular needs, skills, abilities, working conditions, and living environments of all targeted end users, including individuals with disabilities, as well as the applicant's plans for training end users, upgrading their skills, and building community awareness, knowledge and support of the project.

5. Evaluation and Documentation (15%)

Each application will be rated on its potential to evaluate and document the effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed solution(s) and anticipated outcome(s) of the project. Reviewers will assess the degree to which evaluation mechanisms are an integral component of each stage of the proposed project, thus ensuring project managers can assess not just the project's ultimate outcomes but also identify ongoing progress toward goals, design or implementation problems and appropriate modifications.

When examining an applicant's proposed evaluation efforts, reviewers will assess the evaluation design (including methodological approach and data collection and analysis methods), implementation plan, and the allocation of resources (i.e., budget, staff, and management) for evaluation. Reviewers also will assess the qualifications of any proposed evaluators. Finally, applicants will be rated on the extent to which their plans include effective record keeping strategies that will assist in assessment of the project and facilitate future evaluations of the applicant's efforts.

For Further Information, Contact:

For information regarding preparation and submission of the application, questions about the process, or inquiries about statewide web site proposals, please contact Jennifer Bateman, Program Analyst for Technology, Telephone: 202.336.8835, Fax: 202.336.7272, Email: batemanj@lsc.gov.

For questions about proposals from: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Micronesia, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, Washington and Wyoming, please contact Glenn Rawdon, Program Counsel for Technology, Telephone: 202.336.8868; Fax: 202.318.4508; E-mail: grawdon@lsc.gov,

For questions about proposals from: Alabama, Alaska, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virgin Islands, West Virginia and Wisconsin, please contact Joyce Raby, Program Analyst for Technology, Telephone: 202.336.8876, Fax: 202.336.7272, Email: jraby@lsc.gov

If you have a general question, please email techgrants@lsc.gov.

Appendix I

Other Information

Electronic Information. Information about LSC, including this document and the *Guidelines for Preparing Applications*, can be retrieved electronically via the Internet using the World Wide Web. Use www.lscopp.com/techsite/sitepages/grants2003.htm to reach the LSC Recipient Information Bulletin Board, and at the Technology Section, select *LSC Technology Initiative Grants*.

Application Forms. These forms are included in the *Guidelines for Preparing Applications*, which can be obtained at www.lscopp.com/techsite/sitepages/grants2003.htm. LSC requires one original and five copies of the application.

Because of the high level of public interest in projects supported by LSC, we anticipate receiving requests for copies of applications. Applicants are hereby notified that the applications they submit are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. To assist LSC in making disclosure determinations, applicants may identify sensitive information and label it "confidential."

For Assistance Regarding Project Planning. Contact Gabrielle Hammond at <http://ntap.lstech.org/>

Type of Funding Instrument. The funding instrument for awards under this program shall be a grant.

Federal Policies and Procedures. Recipients and subrecipients are subject to all applicable federal laws and federal and LSC policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to federal financial assistance awards.

Pre-Award Activities. If an applicant incurs any project costs prior to the project start date negotiated at the time the award is made, it does so solely at its own risk of not being reimbursed by LSC. Applicants are hereby notified that, notwithstanding any oral or written assurance that they may have received, there is no obligation on the part of the LSC to cover pre-award costs.

No Obligation for Future Funding. If an application is selected for funding, LSC has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with that award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of the LSC.

Past Performance. Unsatisfactory performance of an applicant under prior federal financial assistance awards, including TIG funding, may result in that applicant's proposal not being considered for funding.

False Statements. A false statement on an application is grounds for denial or termination of funds and grounds for possible punishment by a fine or imprisonment as provided in 18 U.S.C. §1001.

Appendix II

Grant Assurances

Below is a sample of the Grant Assurances issued for the 2002 TIG grant cycle. All recipients of TIG 2003 grants will be required to sign a similar document.

2002 TIG GRANT ASSURANCES

1) Recipient is required to send one person to the TIG 2002 Conference sponsored by Legal Services Corporation. This event will be held October 16-18, 2002 in Chicago, IL. Included in the amount of your grant, in addition to amount initially approved, is the sum of \$1,818.00 which is your conference fee. This will be withheld by LSC from your initial payment. (This will be withheld whether or not you send someone to the conference.) LSC will cover the cost to send one person, this includes round-trip airfare (to be booked by LSC's designated travel agency), three nights lodging at the hotel designated by LSC (to be booked by LSC), a shuttle voucher for airport transportation in Chicago, and breakfast and lunch at the conference. Cost of ground transportation to and from the originating airport is the responsibility of the grantee. There will be no reimbursement of any other costs associated with attending the conference.

2) Within the limits of its project budget, recipient will cooperate with Legal Aid Society of Cincinnati, recipient of a grant from LSC for the purpose of developing uniform standards for project evaluations and directing the design of evaluation components, and recipient will conform its evaluation component by using these evaluation tools as requested by LSC.

3) Any product or software program developed with these grants should provide for the following:

a) that the ownership of the product or software will vest in LSC, or can be licensed for modification and/or use by other LSC programs, for little or no charge (including access to development tools).

b) that such products be compliant with the XML standards developed by the National XML project funded this year, TIG 02214, to facilitate the transfer and submission of data between legal services providers (LSC and non-LSC funded), the courts, social service agencies, and others.

c) that such products will comply with naming conventions currently under development. This paragraph refers to document assembly specifically, but not exclusively. Naming conventions are definitions of fields within documents (respondent, litigant, address, etc.). As products are developed they support replication if all documents define fields in the same manner.

d) that such products, including web sites, will conform to the standards developed by the Legal Aid Information Standards and XML Project (formerly IMAG) as found on LSTech (http://lstech.org/workgroups/tech_standards).

4) Recipient will take into account during the development of any web site or pro se materials the special needs of persons with disabilities to ensure said sites and materials are accessible.

5) Recipient is responsible to, as soon as possible, report significant problems, issues or plan modifications (e.g. significant delays, major changes in design or equipment, major budget changes, major staffing modifications) to the LSC TIG contact person.

6) Funding for TIG grants is driven by the cost of implementation. When a TIG grant is awarded, funds are set aside up to the maximum anticipated cost to implement the project as it is described in the proposal. That maximum is the grant award amount. Should the cost of actual implementation be less than originally anticipated, any unspent funds are re-invested in the TIG program for award in the subsequent grant cycle. The TIG recipient has sole responsibility for funding requirements that exceed the grant award amount. LSC will not increase grant award amounts.

7) 2002 TIG recipients are required to submit quarterly reports using the Online Milestone Reporting System. Please see attached instructions for further details. Additionally, all programs will input their payment schedules, including milestones, into this system and all payment requests and milestone completion reports will be submitted through this system, supplemented by supporting documentation as required by LSC staff. This system will be explained at the TIG 2002 Conference.

8) It is important that information about the different TIG projects be available to other legal services programs. Because of this, in 2001 LSC, in partnership with NLADA and the University of Michigan, funded LSTech.org (www.lstech.org). There is a section on this website for information ongoing technology projects in legal services. Recipient will be sure that it lists its TIG project here and keeps its project area up to date during the term of the grant, including posting copies of its quarterly reports to LSC, edited for public distribution.

9) The initial payments for website renewal grants will be \$1,818, which will be withheld by LSC to cover the cost for recipients to attend the TIG 2002 conference (see paragraph 1). All other payments will be made as the milestones are reached as per the payment schedule, subsequent to completion of the original website grant. In short, the renewal grant will not begin until the original website grant is successfully completed.