



Legal Services Corporation
America's Partner For Equal Justice

**Guidelines for Preparing Applications
Legal Services Corporation
Technology Initiative Grants**

2004

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INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDELINES

The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) staff designed these *Guidelines for Preparing Applications* (Guidelines) to help you address the *Review Criteria* identified in the *Notice of Availability of Funds* (Notice) and to complete the application. Please note that the suggestions presented here are not a prescription for a successful application. The ultimate goal is to present your project in a clear and compelling manner with the understanding that reviewers will rate your project based on how well you address the **Review Criteria**.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Electronic submissions for the 2004 TIG grant cycle must be completed no later than **5:00 P.M. EDT, May 14, 2004**. We will not accept applications or portions of applications in hard-copy format.

LSC will reject every application submitted after the application deadline. Therefore, we urge you to allow sufficient time for online submission.

LSC will provide confirmation via email of the completed electronic submission of each application. You should keep this email as your verification that your application was submitted. If you do not receive such an email, you may inquire at Techgrants@lsc.gov.

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.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING APPLICATIONS

An LSC application is complete only when it contains the items referenced below (excluding optional items). A complete LSC application includes the following items and, for ease of processing, should be assembled in the following order:

- **Standard Application Form, Technology Initiative Grants Application Form** (scanned copy must be signed and placed on top)
- **Executive Summary** (1 page, up to 250 words, does not count against overall page limit)
- **Standard Budget Form**
- **Budget Narrative** (Does not count against overall page limit)
- **Table of Contents** (Optional, does not count against overall page limit)
- Project Narrative (Up to 8 pages)
- **Appendices to the Project Narrative** (Optional, up to 32 pages) **includes timelines, technical diagrams, organizational charts, maps, letters of support, résumés, etc.**
- **Proposed Payment Schedule**

■ **Statement of Additional Funds**

Each of the items above should be scanned into one document for submission in the online system. You will be asked to upload one (1) final application document.

Page Limits

Your Project Narrative and Appendix must not exceed forty (40) pages. The 40-page limit includes a Project Narrative of up to eight (8) pages and thirty-two (32) pages of appendices (e.g., tables, timelines, organizational charts, memoranda of understanding, technical designs, illustrations, maps, letters of support, résumés, and supporting documents).

The 40-page limit does not include the Executive Summary, Standard Forms (Application and Budget), table of contents, payment schedule, or budget information. You may go over the limit to include these items.

It is important to stay within your page limits. Reviewers will be instructed to ignore any portion of your application that extends beyond the specified page limits. Because the Project Narrative is limited to 8 pages, you should include information in the appendices that supports your application. CD-ROMs, disks, video or audiotapes should not be included in your application.

Page Formats

The application should be typed, single-sided, single-spaced, on 8" x 11" paper. Your text should be a font no less than 12 points with margins no less than one inch (1").

This sentence is in 12-point font. Do not use a font size smaller than this in your application.

You should also number the pages of your application consecutively, starting with the first page of the Project Narrative. Also, please number the pages of the appendices.

Total Number of Copies

LSC requests that each applicant submit **one (1) original signed application.** **This copy should be scanned and submitted electronically.** This copy with the original signature should be retained by the program.

Signatures

An original signature is required at the **bottom of** the Technology Initiative Grants Application Form. **Failure to include an original signature on the application may result in the rejection of your application.** The Application should be signed by someone who is authorized to commit the applicant organization, such as the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, President, or Executive Director.

Amendments to Applications after Application Deadline

LSC will **not** accept amendments to an application submitted after the application deadline unless specifically requested by LSC staff. We will notify you if any additional information is needed to evaluate the application. LSC may request information from applicants at any time.

Changes in Applicant's Contact Information

If the contact information submitted on the *Standard Application* changes after submission, you should immediately notify LSC in writing. If possible, please use a street address, not a Post Office box, when completing this form.

Waiver Requests

As stated in the *Notice*, LSC does not intend to waive any provisions of the *Notice*. However, under extraordinary circumstances, and when it is in the best interest of our targeted client community to do so, LSC may, on its own initiative or when requested, waive certain provisions in the *Notice*. LSC cannot waive requirements that are statutory, only those that are discretionary. **Please note**, as described in the *Notice*, requests to waive the application deadline will not be considered unless received by LSC prior to the application deadline.

- If you plan to request a waiver prior to the application deadline, **you must write a letter, addressed to LSC, c/o the address listed at the beginning of this document, stating clearly (1) which provision(s) you are asking to be waived, and (2) the extraordinary circumstances that necessitate the request.** The request must be clearly identified as a "Waiver Request." **LSC cannot guarantee that it will be able to resolve waiver requests before the application deadline.**
- If you are requesting a waiver at the same time that you submit your application, **you must insert a document stating clearly (1) which provision(s) you are asking to be waived, and (2) the extraordinary circumstances that necessitate the request.** In order to ensure the timely processing of your waiver request, the request must be clearly identified as a "Waiver Request" and inserted immediately after the Standard Application Form.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING THE APPLICATION FORM

Each application should begin with a completed Application Form. (All forms needed for the application are available online at www.lscopp.com/techsite/sitepages/grants2004.htm.) You should check the box for the main grant category under which you are applying. Please check only one. If you think an application should be considered in another area as well, please so indicate in the Executive Summary as instructed below.

Next, please indicate the total amount of funds you are requesting from LSC, and the total cost of the proposed project. Also, give a brief description of the nature of the project. This should be no more than six lines.

Finally, fill out the information identifying your program and the person you wish us to contact about your application, then sign and date the application.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING A BUDGET

As a component of the Project Feasibility review criterion, reviewers will analyze your budget request in terms of its clarity, cost-effectiveness, and consistency with the goals and objectives described in your Project Narrative. The proposed budget should be appropriate to the tasks proposed and sufficiently detailed so that reviewers can easily understand the relationship of items in the budget to the project activities. The following section is intended to guide you through the process of preparing a budget for your application. It includes information on identifying and clarifying eligible costs and examples to help you prepare the required budget documentation.

Budget Form

The Budget Form is available online at www.lscopp.com/techsite/sitepages/grants2004.htm. This form is to be submitted electronically. Be sure to fill in your grantee name and number. There are fifteen budget items that must be filled in. Each area is the total for that category. For example, item 5 is for equipment purchases. If you are buying a server, router and battery backup, the costs of all three items would be added together for this category. Use the sum of these costs in this form only. In your Budget Narrative, you will set out descriptions and specific costs for each of these items. The Budget Form is the summary, the Budget Narrative is for the detail.

For each of the fifteen categories, we want to see who is paying for what, so this form has five columns. They are for (a) the amount you expect to receive from LSC, (b) your contributions, (c) additional funds from other LSC-funded partners, (d) additional funds from non-LSC funded partners, and (e) the total of (a), (b) (c) and (d). All calculations will be tabulated automatically.

Budget Narrative

In the Budget Narrative, you will flesh out the budget items listed in the Budget Form. This is the place for detail. Also, it is the place for cataloging your proposed expenditures in relation to the project timetable. If the term of the project is for three years, you should give the proposed expenditures for each of those years. Most projects will have identifiable stages. LSC anticipates structuring the grants so that they are payable in installments, conditioned upon completion of these stages. You should identify the budget requirements for each of the different stages of the project in the Budget Narrative.

In order for the reviewers and program staff to evaluate your budget, you should fully explain each budget item. The budget must be reasonable for the tasks proposed, and the relationship of

items in the budget to the Project Narrative, especially the project objectives, should be clearly defined and communicated.

When the grant award is made, you are committed to the share of the total project cost proposed in the application. Therefore, be sure that all additional funds proposed in an application are allowable, achievable, and defensible.

LSC will support most costs associated with a technology project. LSC allows costs for personnel, fringe benefits, computer hardware and software, other end-user equipment, telecommunication services and related equipment, consultants and other contractual services, travel, rental of office equipment, furniture and space, supplies, etc. that are allowable under the applicable cost principles. Unspecified administrative costs will not be funded. The only cost category specifically excluded is construction costs (see the Eligible Costs section of the *Notice*).

Discounts: You should also be aware that the value of products or services must reflect the fully discounted price to your organization. For instance, if you receive a 70% discount on computer equipment, then the value of the equipment should appear in the budget as the **actual amount you paid** (i.e., 30% of the total cost of the computer equipment).

Program Income: As indicated in the *Notice*, any program income generated by a proposed project is subject to special conditions and needs to be identified appropriately in the budget.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The second page of every application should be a concise, one (1) page Executive Summary, **not to exceed 250 words**. The Executive Summary is your first opportunity to introduce the reader to your project; it should be factual, brief, and focused on your efforts.

For TIG 2004, LSC will support projects in the following application areas:

- **Statewide Technology (Requires Matching Funds)**
- **State Plan Implementation**
- **Pro Se**
- **Access Projects**
- **Statewide Web sites**
- **Open Category**

In order to assign each application to a peer review panel with the appropriate expertise, LSC requires that each applicant identify one of the application areas listed above that best categorizes the project being proposed. Some projects may encompass or touch upon more than one application area. While LSC encourages cross-application area linkages, it is important that you select a primary area that constitutes the "best fit." For more details on the application areas, please see *Grant Categories* in the *Notice*.

In order to facilitate the review of your application, begin the Executive Summary with the following sentence: "This is a project intended for the [*choose one of the six application areas listed above*] primary application area."

If applicable, you can also choose another one of the application areas as a secondary area. Your Executive Summary's first sentence would then read: "This is a project intended for the Pro Se primary application area and Access Projects as a secondary application area."

The Executive Summary should briefly cover the core aspects of the project and address the following questions:

- What are the goal(s) of the project?
- What are the anticipated outcomes and impact for clients of the project?
- What is innovative about the project?
- How many sites are there and where are they located?
- What technologies are to be employed?
- What will users do with the technology?
- Who are the communities to be served?
- What organizations are participating as project partners?

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING THE PROJECT NARRATIVE

The Project Narrative is your opportunity to convince readers that your project fits LSC objectives. It is the one place in the application where you have an opportunity to speak in your own voice, not filling out a form, not explaining budget details but speaking directly about the goals of your project, the means with which you expect to achieve your goals, the partners you plan to involve, and the people affected by the project outcomes.

Readers will review your presentation from the perspective of how well you address the ***Review Criteria*** defined in the ***Notice***. Therefore, review the discussion of the seven ***Review Criteria*** in the ***Notice*** carefully before preparing your ***Project Narrative***.

The ***Project Narrative*** should start with a section that clearly identifies what your project is and what you hope to accomplish with it. Next, you should address each of the **Review Criteria** with six clearly marked sections, one for each of the criteria.

Appendices to the Project Narrative

In addition to the ***Project Narrative***, you have up to 32 pages to fully document your proposal. You can include timelines, technical diagrams, organizational charts, maps, letters of support, résumés, etc. You are encouraged to do so. For example, most technology projects will use outside firms and consultants for implementation. Information on the past projects and credentials of these firms and consultants will be essential in determining the likelihood of success. Be sure to give us as much information as you can.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

- ***Be succinct and clear: Because of page limitations, you should discuss your project clearly and succinctly. Reviewers are less interested in jargon and***

- exaggeration and more interested in learning what you are proposing and how well you respond to the five *Review Criteria* published in the *Notice*.
- *Review the Project Narrative once it is complete: One of the biggest mistakes applicants can make in writing their Project Narratives is to treat each of the Review Criteria as a separate and distinct writing task. Even though each section of the Project Narrative should correspond to the five Review Criteria, each should be viewed as a stage in a coherent and convincing presentation. It should not appear to the reviewers that various parts of a single narrative have been written by different people, and that no one appears to have read the narrative all the way through to check for spelling mistakes, stylistic inconsistencies, redundancies, factual omissions, and unexplained assumptions. A good strategy is to let someone who is not familiar with the project, but understands technology, read and critique the Project Narrative before it is sent to LSC.*
 - *Do not use pointers to online resources: Because World Wide Web pages or other online resources can be altered after the close of the grant round, you cannot use pointers to online resources to augment your application. Reviewers will be instructed to ignore pointers to online resources. If you want to include documentation available on the Internet, you should print the material and include it in your appendix.*
 - *Use appendices to expand your presentation: Please keep in mind that you are writing to a diverse group of readers — independent reviewers, LSC staff, and the LSC selecting official. You should not assume that the people who are reading your application know any information about you, your organization, your project, or the individuals in the communities you are trying to impact. Use the thirty-two (32) pages allocated for appendices to expand upon the points you want to discuss in greater detail.*
 - *Check each copy of the original application: Reviewers can only evaluate proposals using the documentation that you provide. It is your responsibility to ensure that the one original and all copies you submit include the required material.*

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: 202.295.1541, 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, Senior Program Counsel for Technology, Telephone: 202.295.1552; 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: 202.295.1554, Email: jraby@lsc.gov

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