



**Legal Services Corporation**  
America's Partner For Equal Justice

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

**2006**

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## **INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDELINES**

The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) staff designed these *Guidelines for Preparing Applications* (Guidelines) to help you provide us with enough information to make a decision upon your funding request. Please note that the suggestions presented here are not a prescription for a successful application.

## **APPLICATIONS BY INVITATION ONLY**

For 2006, LSC solicited Letters of Intent to begin the Technology Initiative Grant (TIG) process. After reviewing those Letters of Intent, we have invited certain programs to submit applications for proposed projects. If you did not receive an invitation to apply, you may not apply for TIG funding in 2006.

## **APPLICATION DEADLINE**

Electronic submissions for the 2006 TIG grant cycle must be completed no later than **5:00 P.M. EDT, June 16, 2006**. We will not accept applications or portions of applications in hard-copy format. Begin the process by going to: <http://www.tig.lsc.gov/>.

LSC will not accept applications submitted after the application deadline. Therefore, we urge you to allow sufficient time for online submission.

LSC will provide confirmation via email upon 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](mailto:Techgrants@lsc.gov).

## **ONE PROJECT PER APPLICATION**

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

## **THREE CATEGORIES, TWO PROCEDURES**

For 2006 we have refined the process for applications for website funding. Applications for website funding are not subject to external review but are reviewed internally by LSC to be sure they meet our published criteria. Consequently, the information we need to review these applications is different from what we need for applications in the Open or Replication Category. Both applications will start with the *Standard Application Form*, but from there they will differ. Please follow the procedures listed below for the type of grant you are seeking.

**PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL CATEGORIES**

**Total Number of Copies**

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

**Signatures**

**A signature is required at the bottom of the *Standard Application Form*. Failure to include a 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 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 Form* changes after submission, you should immediately notify LSC in writing or via email.

**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 do so via email addressed to [Techgrants@lsc.gov](mailto:Techgrants@lsc.gov) clearly stating (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 APPLICATIONS IN THE WEB SITE CATEGORY**

For 2006, there are three categories of website grants. They are:

- **New Web Sites**
- **Renewal Web Sites**
- **Continuation Web Sites**

A TIG application in the Web Site Category is complete only when it contains the items referenced below. A complete application includes the following items and, for ease of processing, should be assembled in the following order:

- **Standard Application Form**, (scanned copy must be signed and placed on top)
- **Web Site Questionnaire** (answers to a series of questions that vary by the type of website funding sought)

On the *Standard Application Form*, choose the type of website funding you are seeking. After this form is completed, you must fill out the Web Site Questionnaire that corresponds to the type of website grant you are seeking.

**Please note that the milestones for website grants are fixed and do not need to be entered. By clicking on this form, you can review the milestones you will be expected to complete for the type of grant you are seeking. By applying for a grant in this category, you are agreeing to complete these milestones.**

In addition to the completion of these online application sections, we require one complete copy of the application to be uploaded. At the bottom of each section of the application is a Print Button. Print each page, have the *Standard Application Form* signed as required (see **Signatures** above), assemble all of the pages in the order listed above, scan these printouts into a single document, and upload this final application document. If you have the ability to print directly to PDF and then assemble those separate files into a single PDF file, you may do so, as long as you print the *Standard Application Form* and have it signed, scanned and included in the final application form that is uploaded.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING APPLICATIONS IN OPEN AND REPLICATION CATEGORIES**

A TIG application in the Open or Replication Category is complete only when it contains the items referenced below (excluding the optional item). A complete 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)
- **Standard Budget Form**
- **Budget Narrative**
- **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.**<sup>1</sup>
- **Information on Grantee's Prior TIG Projects**
- **Lessons Learned from other Technology Projects**
- **Proposed Payment Schedule**
- **Statement of Additional Funds**

In addition to the completion of these online application sections, we require one complete copy of the application to be uploaded. At the bottom of each section of the application is a Print Button. Print each page, have the *Standard Application Form* signed as required (see **Signatures** above), assemble all of the pages in the order listed above, scan these printouts into a single document, and upload this final application document. If you have the ability to print directly to PDF and then assemble those separate files into you a single PDF file, you may do so, as long as you print the *Standard Application Form* and have it signed, scanned, and included in the final application form that is uploaded.

### Standard Application Form

Each application should begin with a completed *Standard Application Form*. (All forms needed for the application are available online at <http://www.tig.lsc.gov/>.) You should check the box for Open Category. 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 LSC should contact about your application, then sign and date the application.

### 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Do not use pointers to online resources. Because World Wide Web pages and 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.

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 project's anticipated outcomes and impact for clients?
- 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?

### **Standard Budget Form**

As a component of the 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 *Budget Form* is available online at <http://www.tig.lsc.gov/>. This form is to be submitted electronically. 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, while the *Budget Narrative* is itemized.

For each of the fifteen categories, LSC wants to see who is paying for each budget item. This form has five columns 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 automatically tabulated.

### **Budget Narrative**

In the *Budget Narrative*, you will flesh out the budget items listed in the *Budget Form*. This is the place for detail and for cataloging your proposed expenditures in relation to the project timetable. If the term of the project is 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 budget submitted in the application, including contributions from your program, from other LSC funded partners, and from non-LSC funded partners. 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.

## 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 or explaining budget details, but speaking directly about the goals of your project, the means which you expect to achieve your goals, the partners you plan to involve, and the people affected by the project's outcomes.

Readers will review your presentation from the perspective of how well you address the *Review Criteria* defined in the *Notice*. These are: **Need for the Project (15%), Project Goals and Objectives (20%), State Justice Community Partnerships (15%), Replication (15%), Capacity and Program Staffing (15%), and Feasibility (20%)**. You should carefully review the descriptions of each of these criteria in the *Notice* before preparing your *Project Narrative*.

The *Project Narrative* should start with a section that clearly identifies what your project is and what you hope it will accomplish. Please write this clearly and succinctly. If a reader read nothing but this section of the project narrative, it should be clear what you propose to do, why you propose to do it, and how you plan to accomplish it. Next, you should address each part of the *Review Criteria* in six clearly marked sections, one for each of the criterion.

## Appendices to the Project Narrative

In addition to the *Project Narrative*, you have up to 32 pages to fully document your proposal. You are encouraged to include timelines, technical diagrams, organizational charts, maps, letters

of support, résumés, etc. 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, so be sure to provide as much information as possible.

**The Project Narrative and Appendices combined 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).

**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.

### **Information on Grantee's Prior TIG Projects**

If the applicant has been awarded TIG funds in previous rounds, this portion of the form will be populated with those prior grants listed by TIG number. Please provide a short narrative that gives the current status of each of these prior projects.

### **Lessons Learned from Other Technology Projects**

This is the seventh round of the TIG program. Nearly 300 grants have been awarded thus far. These prior grants give LSC the benefit of the knowledge gained from the various funded projects. In this section of the application, you need to elaborate on how your project relates to prior projects; how it builds upon them, what you have learned from them, and how you will avoid any pitfalls they have revealed.

For example, if you are proposing a video conferencing project, LSC wants to be sure that you have reviewed the results of the Hawaii and Montana projects, looked at the materials on LSTech.org and the LSC Resource Library ([www.lri.lsc.gov](http://www.lri.lsc.gov)), and have spoken with technical people and staff from these programs. In this section you should demonstrate that you have done your homework and are ready to build upon and improve on the projects that have come before. You can search [www.tig.lsc.gov](http://www.tig.lsc.gov) for grant and grantee information.

### **Proposed Payment Schedule**

If you are awarded a TIG, you will receive an initial payment before you start your grant. Subsequent payments will be made for progress completed. In this section of the application you must inform LSC of the number of payments you wish to receive, when you want to receive them, and what tasks (milestones) must be accomplished to complete the project. Each of the milestones must then be associated with a payment.

It is important that each task be entered as its own individual milestone. Do not group tasks together. For example, “Buy Server and software, train content coordinator, and complete evaluation plan” would be three separate milestones, not one.

Our goal with TIG is for you to be operating on our funding as much as possible, which is why you receive an initial payment. Ideally, the money from the initial payment will be sufficient to cover all expenses associated with the milestones for payment two (there are no milestones for the initial payment), and payment two will subsequently provide you with enough money for the milestones associated with payment three, etc. until the grant is completed. You should take care to plan your payments and milestones in this manner. The exception to this general rule is for the last payment, which you cannot receive until your final milestone report (which includes the final report and evaluation) is submitted.

### **Statement of Additional Funds**

On the *Budget Form* you should have listed LSC funding, program project contributions, funds from other LSC funded partners, and funds from non-LSC funded partners. In this section you should specify these other partners by name and identify how much each will be contributing.

### **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 *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 there should be a section of the *Project Narrative* that corresponds to the each one of the *Review Criteria*, each of these should be viewed as a portion of 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, or that no one appears to have read the narrative 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.
- *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 wish to discuss in greater detail.

- *Check the application for completeness:* Reviewers can only evaluate proposals using the documentation that you provide. It is your responsibility to ensure that the uploaded copy you submit includes the required materials.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For information regarding preparation and submission of the application, questions about the process, or inquiries about statewide web site proposals, please contact Mounia Bensalah, Program Analyst, Telephone: 202.295.1543, Email: [bensalahm@lsc.gov](mailto:bensalahm@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, Telephone: 202.295.1552; Email: [gawdon@lsc.gov](mailto:gawdon@lsc.gov),

For questions about proposals from: Alabama, Alaska, American Samoa, 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, Telephone: 202.295.1554, Email: [jraby@lsc.gov](mailto:jraby@lsc.gov)

If you have a general question, please email [techgrants@lsc.gov](mailto:techgrants@lsc.gov).