



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

## **Guidelines for Preparing Applications**

### **Legal Services Corporation Technology Initiative Grants**

**2008**

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Washington, DC 20007  
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## **INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDELINES**

The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) staff designed these *Guidelines for Preparing Applications* (Guidelines) to help applicants provide us with enough information to make decisions on funding requests. This document supplements *Notice: Request for Applications to Apply for 2008 Grant Funding*. (Notice)

## **APPLICATIONS BY INVITATION ONLY**

For 2008, LSC solicited Letters of Intent to begin the Technology Initiative Grant (TIG) process. After reviewing those Letters of Intent, certain programs were invited to submit applications for proposed projects. Unless the program received an invitation to apply, do not apply for TIG funding in 2008.

## **APPLICATION DEADLINE**

Electronic submissions for the 2008 TIG grant cycle must be completed no later than **5:00 P.M. EDT, May 2, 2008**. LSC will not accept applications or portions of applications in hard-copy format. Begin the process by going to: <http://www.tig.lsc.gov/> and click on TIG Online Systems.

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

LSC will provide confirmation via email upon the completed electronic submission of each application. Keep this email as verification that the program's application was submitted. If no email is received, inquire at Techgrants@lsc.gov.

## **ONE PROJECT PER APPLICATION**

Each project for which funding is sought 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. Multiple applications may be submitted, but each discrete project must be submitted separately.

## **THREE CATEGORIES, TWO PROCEDURES**

Applications for Web site funding are not subject to external review but are reviewed internally by LSC to be sure they meet published criteria. Consequently, the information needed to review these applications is different from that needed 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 sought.

**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 applicant.

**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 the 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. Applicants will be notified 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, 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 the 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.

- Programs planning to request a waiver prior to the application deadline **must do so via email addressed to [Techgrants@lsc.gov](mailto:Techgrants@lsc.gov) clearly stating (1) which provision(s) are asked 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.**
- Waiver requests made at the same time applications are submitted **must consist of a document inserted into the application packet and stating clearly (1) which provision(s) are asked to be waived, and (2) the extraordinary circumstances that necessitate the request**. In order to

ensure the timely processing of the 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 2008, there are two categories of Web site grants. They are:

- **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 Web site funding sought)

On the *Standard Application Form*, the type of Web site funding sought will be filled in from the information provided in the letter of intent. Verify that all of the information that was filled in automatically is correct. Complete the remaining blanks on the form, and then fill out the Web Site Questionnaire that corresponds to the type of Web site grant sought.

**Please note that the milestones for Web site grants are fixed and do not need to be entered. By clicking on this form, applicants can review the milestones expected to be completed for the type of grant sought. By applying for a grant in this category, the applicant is agreeing to complete these milestones.**

In addition to the completion of these online application sections, LSC requires one complete copy of the application 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. Applicants with the ability to print directly to PDF and then assemble those separate files into a single PDF file may do so, as long as the *Standard Application Form* has been printed, signed, scanned and is 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**
- **Payment Milestones**
- **Statement of Additional Funds**

In addition to the completion of these online application sections, one complete copy of the application must 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. Applicants with the ability to print directly to PDF and then assemble those separate files into a single PDF file may do so, as long as the *Standard Application Form* has been printed, signed, scanned and is 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/>.) The category under which the grant is being submitted will be filled in automatically according to the letter of intent submitted. Next, please indicate the total amount of funds requested 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 the applicant and the person LSC should contact about the 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 the first opportunity to introduce the reader to the project; it should be factual, brief, and focused on the purpose of the project.

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<sup>1</sup> Do not use pointers to online resources. Reviewers will be instructed to ignore pointers to online resources. To include documentation available on the Internet, print the material and include it in the 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 technologies?
- Who are the communities to be served?
- What organizations are participating as project partners?
- What is the program's plan to sustain the project after the end of the grant?

### **Standard Budget Form**

As a component of the Feasibility review criterion, reviewers will analyze the budget request in terms of its clarity, cost-effectiveness, and consistency with the goals and objectives described in the *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 the project plans to purchase a server, a router and a 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 the *Budget Narrative*, set out descriptions and specific costs for each of these items. The *Budget Form* is the summary, while the *Budget Narrative* is itemized.

Indicate who is paying for each of the 15 budget items. The *Budget Form* has five columns for (a) the amount requested from LSC, (b) the applicants 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**

Use the *Budget Narrative* to expand on the budget items listed in the *Budget Form*. This is the place for detail and for cataloging proposed expenditures in relation to the project timetable. If the term of the project is three years, 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. Identify the budget requirements for each of the different stages of the project in the *Budget Narrative*.

Fully explain each budget item so that it can be effectively evaluated. 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, the applicant is committed to the budget submitted in the application, including contributions from the applicant, from other LSC funded partners, and from non-LSC funded partners. Therefore, be sure that the anticipated additional resources are realistic.

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 office space and supplies that are allowable under the applicable cost principles. Unspecified administrative costs will not be allowed. The only cost category specifically excluded is construction costs (see the Eligible Costs section of the *Notice*).

**Discounts:** The value of products or services must reflect the fully discounted price to the applicant. For instance, if there is a 70% discount on computer equipment, then the value of the equipment should appear in the budget as the **actual amount paid** (i.e., 30% of the undiscounted price 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 the applicant's opportunity to convince readers that the project fits LSC objectives. Speak directly about the goals of the project, the means to achieve these goals, the project's partners, and the people affected by the project's outcomes.

Reviewers will review the presentation from the perspective of how well the narrative addresses 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%)**. Carefully review the descriptions of each of these criteria in the *Notice* before preparing the *Project Narrative*.

The *Project Narrative* should start with a section that clearly identifies what the project is and what it will accomplish. Please write this clearly and succinctly. If a reader reads nothing but this section of the project narrative, it should be clear what is proposed, why it is proposed, and how the project will be implemented. Next, 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*, up to 32 pages may be submitted to fully document the proposal. These may include documents such as timelines, technical diagrams, organizational charts, maps, letters of support, and résumés. For example, most technology projects will use outside firms and consultants for implementation. Because information on the past projects and

credentials of these firms and consultants will be essential in determining the likelihood of success, be sure to provide sufficient information of this sort. .

**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.

**It is important to stay within the allowed page limits.** Reviewers will be instructed to ignore any portion of the application that exceeds the specified page limits. Because the *Project Narrative* is limited to 8 pages, include information in the appendices that supports the 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 eighth round of the TIG program. Over 300 grants have been awarded thus far. These prior grants give LSC the benefit of the knowledge gained from them. In this section of the application, elaborate on how the proposed project relates to prior projects; how it builds upon them, what was learned from them, and how the project will avoid any pitfalls they have faced.

For example, if a video conferencing project is proposed, be sure to review the results of the Hawaii and Montana projects, look at the materials on LSTech.org and the LSC Resource Library ([www.lri.lsc.gov](http://www.lri.lsc.gov)), and speak with technical people and staff from these programs. In this section demonstrate that this review has occurred and that the project will build upon and improve on the projects that have come before.

### **Proposed Payment Schedule**

If awarded a TIG, in most instances the program will receive an initial payment before the start of the grant. Subsequent payments will be made for progress completed. In this section of the application inform LSC of the number of payments proposed, how much each payment will be, and the anticipated starting and ending date of each period. (Milestones, the individual tasks to be completed for each payment, are entered in the next section.)

An initial payment is made so that the grantee will be operating on TIG funds to the extent possible. Ideally, funds from the initial payment will be sufficient to cover most of the expenses associated with the milestones for payment two (there are no milestones for the initial payment), and payment two will subsequently provide sufficient funds for the milestones associated with payment three, etc., until the grant is completed. Plan the milestones and payments in this manner. The exception to this general rule is for the last payment, which will not be made until the final milestone report (which includes the final report and evaluation) is submitted.

**Payment Milestones**

The Proposed Payment Schedule must be completed and locked before this section can be completed. For each payment period, list the discrete tasks that will be completed during that period. 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” should be three separate milestones, not one.

**Statement of Additional Funds**

As noted above, the *Budget Form* should include a listing of LSC funding, program project contributions, funds from other LSC funded partners, and funds from non-LSC funded partners. In this section, specify these other partners by name and identify how much each will be contributing.

**GENERAL SUGGESTIONS**

- *Be succinct and clear.* Because of page limitations, use care to discuss the project clearly and succinctly. Reviewers are less interested in jargon and exaggeration and more interested in learning what is proposed and how well it responds 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. Review 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 submitted to LSC.
- *Use appendices to make the proposed project understandable.* Please keep in mind that the application will be read by a diverse group of reviewers — independent reviewers, LSC staff, and the LSC President. Do not assume that the people who are reading the application are familiar with the applicant, the project, or the individuals in the communities impacted. Use the thirty-two (32) pages allocated for appendices to expand upon the important points in greater detail.
- *Check the application for completeness.* Reviewers can only evaluate proposals using the documentation that is provided. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that the uploaded copy includes the required materials.

***FOR MORE INFORMATION***

For information regarding preparation and submission of the application or questions about the process, please contact Magali Khalkho, Program Analyst, Telephone: 202.295.1543, Email: [khalkhom@lsc.gov](mailto:khalkhom@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: [grawdon@lsc.gov](mailto:grawdon@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)

For general questions, please email [techgrants@lsc.gov](mailto:techgrants@lsc.gov).