

2019 PRIVATE GRANTS PROGRAM

Program Overview and Application Instructions

I. About the DC Bar Foundation

Since 1978, the DC Bar Foundation has funneled more than \$64 million into DC's legal aid network to ensure that every District resident, regardless of income, has access to justice. The Foundation makes strategic investments in legal aid providers and the critical issues facing District residents in order to strengthen and expand our civil legal aid network and improve our community. As the largest funder of civil legal aid in the District, the Foundation is a steadfast community partner, committed to protecting access to justice in life's most pivotal moments.

In addition to our grant programs, the Foundation administers loan repayment assistance programs for attorneys working at DC legal aid organizations and provides training and technical assistance to these organizations. Learn more by visiting our website: www.dcbfoundation.org.

II. Overview of the Private Grants Program

The DC Bar Foundation (DCBF) is pleased to announce that it will award at least \$600,000 for the Private Grants Program, with the grant year January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019. Legal aid providers located in the District of Columbia are eligible to receive private funding in the form of general support for the organization or a civil legal aid project.

Funding for the Private Grants Program comes from individual, law firm, and corporate donations, as well as revenue from the Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts (IOLTA) program. DCBF is the administrator of DC's IOLTA program, which pools the interest accrued on eligible client funds held in trust by attorneys and funds legal aid programs throughout DC. DC's IOLTA Program was created in 1985 by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, and the program became mandatory in 2010. All attorneys barred in the District must place eligible client funds—those that are nominal in amount or will be held for only a short period of time—in a DC IOLTA account offered by an approved financial institution. Learn more about IOLTA here: <https://dcbfoundation.org/iolta/>.

III. Eligibility for Funding

A. Eligibility for Private Funding

Qualified recipients must:

1. Be a not-for-profit DC corporation;
2. Have tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
3. Operate primarily within the District of Columbia;

4. Be located within the District of Columbia; and,
5. Have as a primary purpose the provision of civil legal services to low-income residents of DC.*

*An organization meets the primary purpose test if the majority of its total organizational resources and/or legal services department or project are spent on the delivery of civil legal services to low-income District residents without charge.

B. Definitions

DCBF defines the following terms for the purpose of determining eligibility for the Private Grants Program:

1. **“Civil legal services”** must include the individual representation of District residents. It may also include the following:
 - a. The supervision of such representation;
 - b. Appellate advocacy on behalf of District residents; and,
 - c. Policy advocacy in the District that is associated with the representation of individual clients.
2. **“Low-income”** is calculated by using the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) income limits that determine the eligibility for District residents for HUD’s assisted housing programs.
3. **“District resident”** is defined as any individual with a residential address in the District of Columbia. DCBF may accept an organization’s reasonable functional alternatives to this definition to the extent that DCBF determines such functional alternatives are consistent with the goal of increasing access to justice in the District for special populations, including but not limited to individuals in correctional facilities, individuals living in or fleeing from violence, and homeless individuals.

IV. Funding Principles, Standards and Priorities

A. Principles to Guide Allocation of Funds

The primary purpose of the Private Grants Program is to fund civil legal services to low-income District residents. Thus, funding will be provided:

1. ONLY for free civil legal services; and,
2. ONLY for services to low-income District residents.

B. The Foundation’s Standards for Funding

Funding will be provided to civil legal aid organizations that have systems in place that align with widely accepted industry standards for promoting quality, efficiency, and effectiveness in the delivery of civil legal aid, including methods for self-assessment to provide feedback regarding the extent to which those systems are achieving their desired purpose.

A strong proposal will demonstrate that the applying organization:

1. Seeks to identify and respond to the most pressing civil legal needs of the low-income people it serves;
2. Has systems in place to assure appropriate supervision, training, and development of its staff, applies feedback obtained from stakeholders and clients to evaluate and improve organization effectiveness and quality;
3. Integrates pro bono attorneys and others to supplement and increase the effectiveness of its representation and other services;
4. Provides other services designed to increase accessibility of legal services to low-income DC residents, such as assistance with self-help strategies, legal information through its website or other channels, community legal education; and,
5. Engages with other important stakeholders working on behalf of or serving its targeted client population, such as the judiciary, government agencies, and social services agencies.

A strong proposal for private funding will also demonstrate that the organization:

1. Has adequate capacity for delivering the services that are proposed, as indicated by experience in providing services similar to those being proposed, related current work that will be supported or enhanced by the proposed services, and other factors.
2. Has a high likelihood of sustainability, taking into account such factors as potential funding sources beyond DCBF, a track record of successful fundraising, a longer-term service delivery strategy, and other factors.

C. The Foundation's Priorities for Funding

Additionally, in allocating available funding, the Foundation will give priority to proposals that seek to address the most pressing legal needs of the District's low-income residents and make legal services accessible to this population.

Proposals that address one or more of the following criteria will be given priority (all other factors being equal):

1. Is likely to expand the number of DC residents who are provided legal assistance.
2. Seeks to avoid duplication of services being provided in the District, in the same issue area, or to the same special population segments as those being proposed.
3. Is likely to make legal assistance more accessible to DC residents.
4. Is likely to expand pro bono participation by recruiting, training, and supervising law firm attorneys to help deliver free legal assistance to DC residents.
5. Is likely to leverage DCBF resources by applying them strategically to expand efforts by other service providers and/or provide services that could NOT potentially be supported by other funding sources.
6. Will test innovative approaches for achieving the above priorities.

V. Application Instructions and Timeline

A. Application Structure

There are three sections required for the Private Grants Program application:

1. **PART ONE: ORGANIZATION DATA** describes the overall civil legal aid organization that is applying for DCBF funding. If you are applying for more than one grant, this information should be the same for all applications, including all applications for the Access to Justice (ATJ) and Private grants programs, since it is about your organization, rather than about your proposal (Part Two).

There are two options: (1) you can submit one application before starting the second, and the information entered in Part One will auto-fill into Part One of your second application, if the second application is created under the same account which the first was submitted; or (2) you can download the Word document version of Part One from the online application or our website, prepare your answers on this document, and then copy and paste into Part One of each application.

2. **PART TWO: PROPOSAL** describes the activities for which you are seeking DCBF funding. You must submit a different Part Two for each proposal submitted.
3. **PART THREE: PROPOSAL ATTACHMENTS** includes required signatures, the project budget (for project-support grants only), funding information, client eligibility guidelines, client story, letters of support, memoranda of understanding, a board list, and any supplemental documents.

B. Definitions of Application Terms

- **“Legal assistance”** includes any activity designed to help an individual understand or resolve a legal problem. It includes representation limited to advice or brief service as well as all forms of extended representation. Legal assistance does not include legal information offered to an individual in the form of a pamphlet or letter or oral presentations, trainings, or conversations offering general legal information.
- **“Legal information”** consists of general guidance provided to the general public regarding legal rights and responsibilities, as well as steps that can be taken to resolve legal problems on their own. The information can be given in the form of a pamphlet, self-help packet, letter with generalized advice, or guidance provided in a pro se clinic. No attorney-client relationship is formed when legal information is provided. *Do not* include participants in community legal education events.

C. How to Apply

The application and all attachments must be submitted via our online system. The link to start a Private Grants Program application is available on our website here:

<https://dcbarfoundation.org/grants/private-grants/>. There are three unique links for 2019 applications; they are clearly marked, but make sure you select the correct one:

1. One link if you are applying for the ATJ Grants Program in the category of underserved areas;

2. A second link if you are applying for the ATJ Grants Program in the category of shared legal interpreter bank; and,
3. A third link if you are applying for one for the Private Grants Program.

Log into the system using a previously created account or create a new account by following the steps as instructed on the screen. **The system works best in Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, and Safari.**

All attachments for which the Foundation provides the template (e.g. required signatures, project budget, and funding information), are available for download on our website here: <https://dcbarfoundation.org/grants/private-grants/>. If a template is not provided (e.g. client eligibility guidelines, Board list, etc.), please create your own, labeling the attachment correctly and using your organization’s letterhead, when appropriate.

For technical questions on using our online system, please refer to this page: <https://dcbarfoundation.org/grants/grantee-portal/>. The most frequently asked questions are:

1. To access an application you have begun or submitted, log in via the main grantee portal (https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_2334) with the same username and password used to start or submit the application. Select “Applications” in the top left corner and make sure the correct status is selected in the drop-down on the right side of the page (“Submitted Applications” or “In Progress Applications”).
2. If you are applying for multiple grants, you can submit multiple applications for your organization under the same account (or different accounts). Just click the unique URL provided to start a new blank application.

D. Timeline of Application Process

Thursday, July 5, 2018	Application released
Wednesday, July 25, 2018	Information session regarding 2019 ATJ and Private funding. Email grants@dcbarfoundation.org to RSVP by July 23. Details below: Arnold & Porter LLP 601 Massachusetts Ave NW Washington, DC 20001 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Friday, August 24, 2018	Application due by 12:00 pm EST
Week of September 24, 2018	Interviews for new applicants and new projects
Mid-December 2018	Awards announced
Friday, December 14, 2018	Revised project budgets due (if applicable)
Friday, December 21, 2018	Signed grant agreements due
Monday, January 1, 2019	Grant year begins

VI. Monitoring and Evaluation

If your proposal is approved, your organization must submit semiannual programmatic reports, financial statements, and client stories (schedule below). Plus, your organization may be required to participate in a programmatic and/or a financial site visit. The Foundation will contact the grantee directly to schedule site visits.

July 2019	Semiannual Programmatic Report, Financial Statements, and Client Story
January 2020	Semiannual Programmatic Report, Financial Statement, and Client Story

VII. Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding the Private Grants Program, how to apply, or our monitoring and evaluation processes, please contact grants@dcbfoundation.org or call 202-853-9023.