

**ARKANSAS ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOUNDATION
GRANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

I. Grant Purposes. The purposes of the Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation’s Grant Policies and Procedures is to provide for funding priorities for grants consistent with the Foundation’s organizational purposes, the directives of the Supreme Court related to the Foundation, and applicable law; to establish qualifications for eligible grantees; and to set grant application requirements. Funds designated by the Foundation for grantmaking shall be limited to programs that:

- promote and support access to the justice system by persons in Arkansas who cannot afford a lawyer and for whom the law does not provide a right to counsel;
- educate the public regarding the needs of Arkansans related to meaningful access to the civil justice system;
- provide student loans and scholarships for the education of lawyers;
- improve the administration of justice in the State of Arkansas;
- assist in support activities of institutions and organizations which improve the administration of justice, including, but not limited to, the Arkansas Access to Justice Commission, the Center for Arkansas Legal Services, Inc., and Legal Aid of Arkansas, Inc., to fulfill their missions of providing access to justice and legal aid to Arkansans who cannot afford a lawyer and who qualify for legal services; and
- carry out other purposes that may be approved from time to time by the Arkansas Supreme Court.

II. Applicability; Availability of Funds. This Policy shall apply to funds of the Foundation that are not otherwise restricted by the donor, grantor, or payor, and generally include IOLTA Program revenues and donations. Grants made under this Policy are subject to the availability of sufficient funds, as determined by the Board, to meet the Foundation’s own operating requirements and to pay grant awards in full.

III. Grant Categories. These categories are listed in order of priority. The Foundation may, in its discretion, allocate up to 100% of funds available for grants in any given year to the highest priority category.

A. Civil Legal Aid to the Poor. Grants in this category are made to Arkansas nonprofit civil legal aid providers. Such grants may include, but are not limited to, the following purposes:

1. Direct delivery of legal services;

2. Delivery of services through private attorneys who volunteer through a legal aid pro bono or “low bono” panel; and
 3. Development and maintenance of forms, fact sheets, and other resources provided to advocates and the public through the statewide website for legal aid (www.arlawhelp.org) or another platform.
- B. Administration of Justice. Grants in this category are made to programs that promote public understanding of and support for civil legal aid; that support delivery of civil legal assistance to individuals who do not qualify for legal aid; that encourage innovation by the court system and the private bar in meeting the civil legal needs of the public; that improve the operation and management of the justice system; that educate the public and improve public understanding about the law; or that promote and support the full range of dispute resolution techniques and alternatives.
- C. Student Loans and Scholarships; Loan Repayment Assistance. Student loans and scholarships are only available to students enrolled in an Arkansas law school. Selection criteria are: a demonstrated commitment to public service, whether the applicant belongs to a minority group historically excluded from or underrepresented in the legal profession, need, merit, and statewide geographical distribution. Loan repayment assistance may be made available to any law school graduate who works full-time in Arkansas for a legal aid organization or who primarily practices in an underserved community, and who makes a minimum commitment of at least three (3) years to work for legal aid or in the underserved community. Student loans, scholarships, and loan repayment assistance may be subject to the terms and conditions of any additional policies or guidelines developed by the Foundation. For purposes of this policy, an “underserved community” is a county where the ratio of practicing attorneys is less than one attorney per 1,000 residents.
- IV. Additional Considerations. The Foundation may, in determining the size and distribution of grants for a given cycle, give priority to applications:
- Submitted by current or past grantees that have a demonstrated track record of satisfying grant requirements and producing expected outcomes;
 - That leverage grant funds with other sources of funding;
 - That advance innovation in delivery of assistance to Arkansans of limited or modest means; or
 - That improve access among underserved communities or populations.
- V. Division of Funds
- A. General Support. General Support grants may be used by grantees for general operating needs. Grants for general support are only available under the Civil Legal Aid to the Poor category. The distribution of such funds shall be determined by the Grants Committee. In making this allocation, the Grants Committee may consider, among other factors, the poverty population residing in the legal aid program’s

service area, the number of clients actually served by the legal aid program, the need for the services provided, and the impact of the services provided. All other grant categories are, for purposes of this policy, considered Special Projects.

- B. Special Projects. Applicants in all Grant Categories may apply for Special Project Funding. The Foundation may make grants for Special Projects out of IOLTA Program revenues or other funding sources, including donations, court settlements, and subgrants. Special Project funding may be used for one-time needs, seed money for new start-up initiatives, research related to the delivery of legal services, and other projects related to access to the civil justice system by all Arkansans.
- VI. Grantee Eligibility Criteria. To be eligible to receive funds from the Foundation, an applicant must (1) be an organization that qualifies as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or a government entity charged by law with functions that relate to the administration of justice or legal education; (2) be in good standing with the State of Arkansas; (3) timely submit a complete application; (4) have adequate internal accounting controls that are capable of tracking grant-related expenditures; and (5) provide a signed Grant Assurances Agreement within thirty (30) days of notification of a grant award.
- VII. Prohibited Activities. Lobbying. Foundation grant funds may not be used for lobbying activities of any kind, including direct lobbying and grassroots lobbying. “Direct Lobbying” is a communication (letter, email, phone call, personal visit, etc.) with a legislator, legislative staff member, or other legislative official that refers to and reflects a view on specific legislation or a legislative proposal. “Direct Lobbying” also includes communications to the public that reflect a view on a ballot measure or referendum. “Grassroots Lobbying” is a communication with the general public that refers to and reflects a view on specific legislation or a legislative proposal and encourages the public to take action.
- VIII. Grant Application and Review Process
- A. Timetable. The general timetable for grant applications, reviews, and award announcements is as follows:
 - 1. Application Publication. A request for proposals should be published on the Arkansas Access to Justice Foundation website at least 45 days prior to the award of grants, with the exception of general support grants to existing grantees that may be made without a request for proposals.
 - 2. Application Deadline. Applications shall be received by 5:00 p.m. on the last business day of the application period. The application deadline will be established by the Grants Committee. Grant applications will not be accepted after the deadline.

3. Application Review. The Grants Committee will conduct the initial review of grant applications and send any follow-up questions or requests to grant applicants. Grants of \$10,000 or less may be approved by the Grants Committee. The Grants Committee will meet and make recommendations to the full board for grant amounts above \$10,000.
4. Announcement of Awards. Grant awards will be announced after approval by the full board, for grant amounts exceeding \$10,000 or by the Grants Committee, for awards of \$10,000 or less.

IX. Applications. The Grants Committee will annually review and approve the form and substance of grant applications.

A. Grant applications shall be designed to minimize the administrative burden on applicants, but may request the following information for grants in the Civil Legal Aid to the Poor and Administration of Justice categories:

1. The category within which the project qualifies.
2. Vital statistics regarding the applicant.
3. A description of the entity's purposes; a nonprofit entity shall attach a copy of its IRS determination letter.
4. A description of the organization, its history, and its purposes.
5. A description of the geographic area to be served, the number of people to be assisted, and the methods used to derive this information.
6. A description of the methods used to identify clients qualified to receive services under the grant, if applicable.
7. A description of other sources of funding that have been obtained or that are being sought for the program or project.
8. A description of community involvement and support for the program or project.
9. A current budget for the organization, a projected budget for the proposed grant project or program, and the actual amount of income received in the previous calendar year.

B. Project Grant Applications. For Project Grants, the application shall be designed to minimize the administrative burden on applicants, but may request the following additional information:

1. An explanation of how the project qualifies for grant funds, its goals, planned activities, and timetable for completion.
2. Identification of other similar projects within the same geographical area.
3. An explanation of how the project is innovative, replicable, and sustainable.
4. Any other requirements specified by the Grants Committee or Foundation Board prior to the request for applications.

- X. Monitoring and Evaluation. The Foundation may monitor and conduct evaluations of grantee performance under the grant as follows:
- A. Grantee Reports. The Foundation will require written reports not exceeding 10 pages from grantees at least annually. Such reports shall be designed to minimize the administrative burden on grantees, but may include an accounting of all grant-related expenditures; audited financial statements; case statistical reports; case outcomes; recoveries and avoidances; client satisfaction data; and client stories. For Project Grants, the grantee shall submit any materials or reports developed using grant funds.
 - B. Audits. The Foundation may audit or cause an audit to be conducted of the Grant Funds.
 - C. Site Visits. The Foundation may, at its expense, conduct site visits by representatives of the Foundation to observe the grant recipient's program, procedures, and operations; discussions of the program with the grant recipient's personnel and board members; and review of client satisfaction surveys.