

LEGAL SERVICES TRUST FUND COMMISSION

PARTNERSHIP GRANTS COMMITTEE

Meeting Summary and Action Items

Wednesday, April 6, 2022, 2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

State Bar of California (Conference Call via Zoom)

Roll Call

Members Present

Chair Eric Isken
William Boschelli
Jason Galkin
Christina Vanarelli

Advisors

Judge Lisa R. Jaskol

Liaisons

Bonnie Hough

Public Members

None

Staff

Christal Bundang
Elizabeth Hom
Danielle MacRae
Dan Passamaneck
Colleen Seto

Members Absent

Diana Kruze
Joseph Lee

OPEN SESSION

Chair Isken called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken, and quorum was established.

II. CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Isken invited members of the public to comment on any items on the agenda. No public comments were made.

III. CONSENT

A. Approval of Meeting Summary and Action Items from February 16, 2022 Meeting

The committee requested an edit to the minutes to accurately reflect the intended scoring process for 2023 Partnership Grant applications. The requested changes were documented in track changes.

The Partnership Grants Committee (committee) approved the edited Meeting Summary and Action Items from the February 16, 2022, meeting (Isken moved, Vanarelli seconded). The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

IV. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

A. 2022 Partnership Grants 2.0 Updates

Lead Program Analyst Christal Bundang provided an update on the administration of the 2022 Partnership Grant 2.0 grants. Programs selected for funding have signed grant agreements and grant funds have been disbursed. The grant period for 2022 Partnership Grants 2.0 grants started April 1, 2022.

B. Initial Calibration of Selected 2023 Partnership Grant Proposals

Bundang summarized the submitted 2023 Partnership Grant proposals. Thirty-one proposals were submitted, requesting a total amount of \$2,899,034. The amount of funds available has not yet been determined, but \$2.53 million was disbursed in 2022 (not including 2.0 grants).

The scoring rubric includes categories on court involvement, project impact, administration, project budget, continuity planning, evaluation, funding priority, and innovation. The 2023 Partnership Grants scoring rubric includes, where appropriate, streamlined rubric categories and definitions, as recommended for all discretionary grants by the Rules Committee working group.

Committee members and State Bar staff reviewed and scored three proposals – from Inland Counties Legal Services, Legal Aid Society of San Diego, and Legal Services of Northern California – before the meeting. The committee then endeavored to reach a calibrated score for each of the three proposals.

Inland Counties Legal Services – Consumer Rights Clinic Expansion

Inland Counties Legal Services (ICLS) requested \$151,000 to provide consumer rights services to pro se litigants both in-person and virtually. The proposed project would be staffed by an attorney, paralegal, and legal secretary. The project currently serves San Bernardino County and intends to expand to Riverside County. The project intends to provide 200 individual services.

When evaluating court involvement, most committee members rated the proposal as “meets expectations.” Committee members were impressed that the project proposed to meet with the court executive. The court also requested the project, which was compelling to staff. The committee discussed the court’s role and impartiality given that the project would only serve one party. The committee chose to average its scores on court involvement, which resulted in a calibrated score of 15.

The committee had wide agreement that the proposal met expectations on project impact, administration, project budget, continuity planning, and evaluation. State Bar staff initially awarded the proposal an “exceeds expectations” in evaluation because the proposal detailed a partnership with a research fellow at University of

California Irvine, but this was not as compelling to committee members. The proposal's calibrated score included "meets expectations" ratings on project impact, administration, project budget, continuity planning, and evaluation.

When evaluating funding priority, the committee discussed how to score proposals that are expansions as well as existing projects that do not currently receive Partnership Grant funds. Committee members recommended that new projects receive a score of five (worth 20 points) on the funding priority category and expansions (to a new courthouse, for example) receive a four (worth 16 points). Committee members did not agree on whether to award ICLS's proposal a four or five on funding priority, so the category average of 17 points was taken.

The committee awarded two optional innovation points because ICLS intends to use technology to generate and prepare litigants' court documents.

ICLS's proposal was awarded a total calibrated score of 73 points; 15 for court involvement, 15 for project impact, 6 for administration, 6 for project budget, 6 for continuity planning, 6 for evaluation, 17 for funding priority, and 2 for innovation.

Legal Aid Society of San Diego – South Bay Restraining Order Project

Legal Aid Society of San Diego (LASSD) requested \$120,000 to assist litigants seeking domestic violence, civil harassment, elder abuse restraining orders. The project does not currently receive Partnership Grant funding. Staffing includes an attorney and advocate, as well as volunteer attorneys. The project intends to provide 3000 individual services.

When evaluating court involvement, committee members were impressed by the number and frequency of meetings with the court and other partners. Services appeared to be well-integrated. The committee's calibrated score included an "exceeds expectations" on court involvement.

The committee awarded the proposal an "exceeds expectations" rating for project impact because of the high number of individual services proposed. The committee asked State Bar staff to seek clarification from LASSD on how many unique litigants would be served, however.

When evaluating administration, committee members were impressed by the extensive experience of the full-time, on-site attorney. The committee chose to average their scores in administration, when resulted in a calibrated score of seven points.

When evaluating project budget, committee members were impressed by the relatively high number of individuals served for a low dollar amount. The budget also only included personnel costs and the budget narrative provided sufficient explanations. The committee recommended that programs not be awarded higher project budget scores for having non-Partnership Grant monies incorporated, because that approach might privilege larger programs that can more easily secure other funds. Several committee members rated the proposal as “meets expectations” and several rated it as “exceeds expectations.” The committee chose to average members’ scores, which resulted in a calibrated score of nine.

The committee had wide agreement that the proposal met expectations for continuity planning and evaluation. Similarly, the committee agreed that the project, while new to the Partnership Grants funding opportunity, was not a new project. The committee therefore awarded the proposal a four (worth 16 points) for funding priority.

The proposal includes access to electronic court records to review program effectiveness. One commission member felt this warranted an innovation point if the court was providing access even when no attorney-client relationship was formed and/or if the access to court records is greater than what would otherwise be available to the public. The committee awarded an average of 0.2 innovation points, pending follow-up with LASSD to clarify the details of the court record access.

LASSD’s proposal was awarded a total calibrated score of 84.2; 20 for court involvement, 20 for project impact, 7 for administration, 9 for project budget, 6 for continuity planning, 6 for evaluation, 16 for funding priority, and 0.2 for innovation.

Legal Services of Northern California – Yolo Consumer Clinic

Legal Services of Northern California (LSNC) requested \$39,000 to assist litigants via a consumer clinic and mediation services. The project is currently in its first year of receiving Partnership Grant funds. Staffing includes a part-time attorney and volunteers. The project intends to provide 196 individual services.

Committee members agreed that the proposal met expectations on court involvement.

When evaluating project impact, committee members noted that the project proposed to provide 196 individual services with just a 0.3 full-time-equivalent attorney. Committee members discussed whether serving a relatively high number of litigants with relatively low staffing should be accessed in the project impact or

project budget rubric category. Committee members were also impressed by the mediation services offered. The committee therefore awarded the proposal an “exceeds expectations” for project impact.

When evaluating administration, some committee members were impressed by the quality control efforts detailed in the proposal, including weekly case review meetings and regular reviews of case files. The committee chose to take the average of their administration scores, resulting in a calibrated score of seven points.

When evaluating project budget, some committee members were impressed by the clarity of detail in the budget narratives. The committee chose to take the average of their project budget scores, resulting in a calibrated score of seven points.

The committee had wide agreement that the proposal met expectations for continuity planning. LSNC identified efforts to identify and secure additional sources of funding, even though efforts were not successful.

When evaluating the proposal’s evaluation methods, some committee members were impressed by the proposal’s description of conducting in-depth telephone surveys with 10 percent of litigants served. Some committee members found the description more specific and detailed than others. The committee chose to take the average of their evaluation scores, resulting in a calibrated score of eight.

When evaluating funding priority, some committee members felt a second-year project should be awarded a score of five (worth 20 points), while others felt it merited a four (worth 16 points). The average was taken, resulting in a calibrated score of 18.

The committee awarded two optional innovation points because the proposal included small-claims mediation over Zoom which is unique and logistically difficult.

LSNC’s proposal was awarded a total calibrated score of 83 points; 15 for court involvement, 20 for project impact, 7 for administration, 7 for project budget, 6 for continuity planning, 8 for evaluation, 18 for funding priority, and 2 for innovation.

2023 Partnership Grants Calibration Sessions Schedule

After awarding calibrated scores for all three proposals, Bundang reminded the committee that the remaining 28 proposals would be scored across six calibration sessions in April. Each scoring calibration session would be attended by a scoring team comprised of State Bar staff members and one or more committee members.

Bundang facilitated scheduling and assigning committee members to one or more scoring sessions.

V. ADJOURN

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 3:44 p.m.

DRAFT