

Legal Services Corporation	Technology Initiative Grants
Anishinabe Legal Services, Inc. (724018)	TIG # 14039

Project Narrative

1. A full description of the project, including the specific technologies the project will develop or implement

Anishinabe Legal Services (ALS), in partnership with the White Earth Band of Ojibwe Tribal Court, White Earth Band of Ojibwe Legal Department, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Tribal Court, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Legal Department, Design Angler, Inc., with valuable support from the Minnesota Legal Services State Support Center (State Support), will implement a document assembly replication project to assist self-represented litigants with civil legal matters in need of dispute before the White Earth and Leech Lake Tribal Courts in northern Minnesota.

The project will utilize technology to create plain English guided interviews and document assembly resources for civil legal matters heard before the White Earth and Leech Lake Tribal Courts. Forty-five (45) various White Earth and Leech Lake Tribal Court forms will be assembled into packets and replicated for hosting on the LawHelp Interactive National HotDocs server. Legal matters and forms to be replicated include divorce (with and without children), custody, parenting time assistance, child support, guardianship (children and adults), adoption, employment appeals, and protective orders, among others.

Specific technologies to be incorporated under project planning include A2J Author and HotDocs document assembly software. Self-represented litigants using the system will go through a series of plain English simplified interview questions regarding their legal matter. Upon completion of the online interview process, the HotDocs document assembly software will input the information into the applicable pro se Tribal Court forms, and assemble/produce accurate forms packets for self-represented litigants to review, sign, file, and serve to commence their legal matter (or as applicable, to file/serve responsive pleadings to Plaintiff/Petitioner filings).

ALS will work closely with the project's proposed IT partner, Design Angler, Inc., along with project partners from the justice community (the White Earth and Leech Lake Tribal Courts, and the White Earth and Leech Lake Legal Departments) to ensure accuracy, ease of use, and maximum benefit for self-represented litigants and the Tribal Courts; project partners will work as a team creating, testing, and implementing the technology to achieve these objectives.

ALS will also collaborate with the Tribal Courts and Legal Departments to create instructional materials and checklists for proper service, filing, and court appearances for each civil legal matter to be included with completed automated court form packets. This will ensure that all pro se litigants have every tool at their disposal necessary to effectively self-represent before the Tribal Courts.

As recommended in the final report from Nebraska Legal Aid on a similar TIG replication project, ALS and Design Angler will also create a video tutorial, walking users step by step through the system and process. This instructional video will be clearly identified and embedded in interviews.

Project supporter State Support has significant experience with creating and implementing similar document assembly projects for Minnesota state court matters, and has generously agreed to assist as needed with advice and guidance throughout the creation and implementation process at no cost.

ALS and project partners will further collaborate to spread outreach and education to community members regarding these resources. ALS will post a link to these online resources on our organization's website. The Leech Lake and White Earth Bands will also provide this link on their Tribal Court websites. State Support will provide this link on Minnesota statewide legal services websites. ALS will reach out to other agencies within our community to seek permission to further post this link in additional

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online locations likely to be seen by community members in need of these resources; such websites include area community action programs, domestic violence shelters and advocacy programs, libraries, among others.

In addition to making links to these resources accessible in a number of online locations frequently visited by community members to be served under project plans, project partners will provide significant outreach and education to community members and community agencies on both the availability of these online resources, and utilization of the A2J Author and HotDocs software.

Personnel with the Leech Lake Tribal Court, White Earth Tribal Court (including court clerks and judges) along with personnel with the White Earth and Leech Lake Legal Departments will fully understand the technology and utilization of the software through the collaborative creating, testing, and implementation process. Justice community partners will provide outreach and training on both availability and usage of the software to community members in need, and many diverse agency representatives throughout both reservation areas.

ALS will also provide seventeen (17) trainings to various agencies regularly working with community members likely to benefit from this project, including eight (8) on the Leech Lake Reservation, eight (8) on the White Earth Reservation, and the battered women’s shelter in Bemidji (located off-reservation between the Leech Lake and White Earth Reservations, frequently serving both low-income White Earth and Leech Lake community members). Trainings will provide both outreach regarding availability of resources, and advocate trainings to directly assist community members with using the technology thereby increasing access points and assistance available for self-represented litigants.

ALS and partners will create written materials describing the project, website locations where resources can be located, and instructions on navigating the system. These written promotional materials will be widely distributed throughout the community to both service provider agencies and members of the community directly. Written materials will be distributed through in-person trainings as mentioned above, through direct mailing, online postings in multiple locations (including the ALS website), numerous listservs, and available for pick-up at all ALS offices, partner Tribal Courts, and Legal Department offices.

It is expected that all necessary work to accomplish project goals and objectives will be completed within eighteen (18) months. The project term proposed is for eighteen (18) months, with nine (9) additional months added to the grant term for evaluation, final reporting, and accounting. The overall grant term proposed, therefore, is for twenty-seven (27) months.

A project timeline is included in the appendix to the grant application.

2. Need for the project

The White Earth and Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Tribal Courts located in rural northern Minnesota are populated nearly entirely by pro se litigants. Due to alarmingly high rates of poverty and unemployment for Tribal members living on the reservations, very few are able to retain a private attorney to help navigate the court process. Compounding the issue is the lack of private attorneys licensed to practice before the Tribal Courts and resulting lack of pro bono and low bono alternatives. Those that legal aid programs are not able to assist are almost always forced to navigate the Tribal Court systems with little to no alternative resources at their disposal.

While the State of Minnesota has successfully utilized technology to provide meaningful assistance to self-represented litigants with matters in dispute before the state courts, lack of uniformity with Tribal Court codes and forms prohibit the use of these resources for Tribal Court matters. Sadly, it is likely that

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a number of low-income Tribal members currently elect to file matters before the state court against their Tribal Court preference due to the considerable variance in pro se resources available for each forum. This project is therefore likely to strengthen the Tribal Courts as a whole and enhance Tribal sovereignty.

Although both the Leech Lake and White Earth Bands post their Tribal Court codes on their official websites, neither Band has assembled substantive law packets for filing or created instructions for litigants in any matter, and the White Earth Band does not post their court forms on their website. This creates markedly increased difficulties for pro se litigants and formidable barriers to accessing justice.

There are currently no technology initiatives in place to assist self-represented community members with matters in need of dispute before the Leech Lake or White Earth Tribal Courts. There are no online document assembly options, and as noted above, pro se forms for the White Earth Tribal Court must be picked up directly from the Tribal Court. The White Earth Reservation is geographically large (it is the largest of the 11 reservations within the State of Minnesota, encompassing 1,296 square miles) and lack of transportation is a major obstacle for low-income community members. Forcing community members to physically travel to the Tribal Court to obtain pro se forms for filing creates a significant chilling effect on community members in need of resolving legal disputes before the Tribal Court.

As neither Band has assembled packets or created instructions for self-represented litigants, community members in need of justice before the Tribal Court face significant barriers even after obtaining pro se forms for completion. Without instructions or packets, self-represented community members are forced to try and decipher the Bands' legal codes to ascertain essential information necessary to commence or respond to a legal action. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring all necessary forms are included and completed, served, and filed properly.

Complicating matters further is that often all the necessary pertinent legal information is located throughout multiple codes without any cross-references or other notice. Many codes on both reservations have different procedural rules for various civil matters, and simply viewing the Bands' rules of procedure will often not provide the information necessary on what is required to commence or respond to a legal matter before the courts. In fact, it is likely to mislead many into following incorrect rules of procedure for the particular matter.

Additionally, many of the applicable legal codes are significantly lengthy. As with most legal codes, they contain high levels of legalese, and are not created to be easily understood by a general audience.

Consequently, self-represented litigants unable to secure professional legal assistance are often forced to try and decipher applicable rules for their legal dispute by combing through large volumes of multiple codes written in a difficult to understand legal language. On average, education levels on the White Earth and Leech Lake Reservations are among the lowest in the State of Minnesota. For community members unable to afford private attorneys, the average education level is even lower. The end result is an incredibly complicated maze of laws facing large groups of people who are the least equipped to navigate it. This can and does result in significantly reduced access to justice for Petitioners, and adverse court decisions against Respondents.

This project, in response to a LSC area of interest for 2014 as set forth in the key initiatives from LSC's 2012-2013 Summit on the Use of Technology to Expand Access to Justice, seeks to address these issues on multiple fronts. Through plain English guided A2J Author interviews and HotDocs document assembly technology, self-represented litigants can proceed with confidence knowing that all pleadings completed and assembled at the end of the interview process will fully conform to each Tribal Court's rules and procedures. Through "next steps" checklists and instructions created collaboratively between ALS and the White Earth and Leech Lake Tribal Courts and Legal Departments for each civil matter,

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self-represented litigants will also have all additional information necessary to properly navigate the Tribal Court systems until the final resolution of their legal matter.

This project will also preserve precious resources of ALS, the Tribal Courts and the Legal Departments who frequently field requests for assistance from community members unable to navigate the legal maze facing pro se litigants due to the barriers described above.

Throughout project planning, ALS has engaged in conversations with Tribal Court and Legal Department personnel regarding these issues and ways in which this project can most effectively and efficiently reduce existing barriers to accessing justice for low-income community members. ALS staff and board have had similar conversations throughout 2014. Due to funding restrictions, ALS provides a number of brief services for community members, many who report that a project such as proposed here would be of tremendous benefit to similarly situated community members. Community members will also play a critical role in technology development, ensuring guided interviews are easily understood (i.e. sufficiently plain English), that instructions and checklists are easy to understand and follow, and that the operational system as a whole is simple to access and navigate.

3. Project Goal, Objectives, Activities, and Evaluation

a. Specify the project's goal and the objectives to achieve the goal. Explain how this will increase the quality or quantity of client services and/or enhance the grantee's operational effectiveness and efficiency

The primary goal of the proposed document assembly replication project is to use A2J Author and HotDocs to create guided interviews, court form templates, and instructions/checklists to assist self-represented litigants with civil legal matters in need of dispute before the Leech Lake and White Earth Tribal Courts easily, efficiently, and effectively produce and file court forms and effectively self-represent without the assistance of an attorney.

The two main objectives to achieve this goal are:

- 1) Use A2J Author and HotDocs to create guided interviews and court form templates that enable self-represented litigants to easily produce accurate pro se pleadings. Create court forms packets for each substantive civil law area heard by the White Earth and Leech Lake Tribal Courts and produce thirty (30) guided interviews and forty-five (45) interactive court forms in the following substantive law areas: Divorce (with and without children), Custody, Parenting Time/Visitation, Child Support, Guardianship, Name Change, Adoption, Child Protection, Protective Orders, Small Claims, General Civil, Employment Appeals, Probate, and Fee Waiver. Project plans also entail creating instructions and checklists for each civil matter to be included with completed automated forms packets to further assist self-represented litigants throughout their legal matter.
- 2) Increase the availability and use of automated forms by self-represented litigants before the White Earth and Leech Lake Tribal Courts. While creating the resources is a critical component of project planning, it is equally important that community members and agencies/organizations serving community members are aware that the resources exist, how they are utilized, and that there are various locations for community members to conveniently access the resources and receive help navigating the system if necessary.

Achieving goals and objectives will provide crucial assistance to self-represented litigants with legal matters in need of dispute before the White Earth and Leech Lake Tribal Courts, eliminating existing barriers to accessing justice and preserving precious resources of ALS, the Tribal Courts, and the Legal Departments.

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b. Identify the strategies and activities that will be undertaken to achieve each of the project objectives.

To achieve objective #1, ALS will undertake several activities throughout the grant term. ALS will identify forms and interviews to automate and assign duties and staff time to help develop forms, guided interviews, and instructions/checklists along with IT partner Design Angler. ALS will work with our justice community partners the White Earth Tribal Court, White Earth Legal Department, Leech Lake Tribal Court, and Leech Lake Legal Department to ensure all forms and instructions/checklists are accurate and fully conform to all applicable laws, rules, and procedures of the courts. ALS will then conduct usability testing involving advocates within the White Earth and Leech Lake Reservation communities and community members to ensure users can easily understand and use the interviews and forms. Throughout this collaborative process, ALS and Design Angler will modify templates to address any problems identified by partners, advocates, and/or community members during the creation and testing phase.

After any and all identified problems or issues have been addressed, ALS will publish the interviews and forms on the statewide website. ALS and partners will also publish online links to the resources on the following websites: Anishinabe Legal Services, White Earth Band of Ojibwe, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, and additional Minnesota Legal Services statewide websites.

To achieve objective #2, ALS and partners within the justice community will develop and implement significant outreach efforts and initiatives to promote the project, increase the number of agencies and organizations providing both access points and website links to resources, train agency/organization representatives to assist community members directly with the system as needed, and overall maximize both the awareness of resources throughout the communities as well as the utilization of resources by self-represented litigants with civil legal matters in need of dispute before the White Earth or Leech Lake Tribal Courts.

c. Identify the evaluation methods and data sets that will be used to evaluate the project.

ALS will measure progress and success in a number of ways. For objective #1, ALS will create lists of all interviews and automated court forms produced along with all instructional materials and checklists created. ALS will obtain written confirmation from the White Earth and Leech Lake Tribal Courts that all forms and instructions/checklists that have been created are accurate, fully conform to all applicable laws, rules, and procedures of the courts, and that all forms are acceptable for use. ALS will carefully and contemporaneously document all usability testing efforts, results from usability testing, and changes made to interviews and forms based on findings during the testing period.

Continued input from community members, legal advocates, and partners will continue to guide project implementation, which will include interviewing/surveying community members and legal advocates utilizing the technology, along with Tribal Court staff and all project partners' observations from the field. Surveying and interviews will include phone interviews, mail questionnaires, and voluntary visitor online surveys. This input will be meticulously documented along with additional modifications made based upon input provided. ALS will document all forms and interviews as well as all instructions/checklists that have been published on the websites named above.

For objective #2, ALS will measure progress and success of outreach efforts through written outreach plans, written descriptions of all outreach activities undertaken, and written materials for outreach and instruction distributed widely throughout the White Earth and Leech Lake Reservation communities. ALS will also document all access points for users along with a description of services available for

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clients at each access point, and all agencies and organizations willing to provide links to the online resources on their websites. Project staff will also monitor and track statistics from the national server on number of times different forms have been accessed and/or downloaded.

4. Justice community partnerships

The major project partners from the justice community are Anishinabe Legal Services, the White Earth Tribal Court, the White Earth Legal Department, the Leech Lake Tribal Court, and the Leech Lake Legal Department.

ALS is a LSC grantee Indian Legal Services Program located in northern Minnesota. ALS staff will administer the grant, and be involved with every step of the project working closely with partners to help create and perfect the Tribal Court forms replication using A2J Author and HotDocs software. ALS will create instructions and checklists in consultation with the Bands' Tribal Courts and Legal Departments to include with completed pro se pleading packets. ALS will provide substantial trainings and undertake extensive outreach efforts throughout the reservations to maximize awareness and employment of these crucial resources created through project plans.

The Leech Lake and White Earth Band of Ojibwe Tribal Courts are the duly established judicial bodies for the two Bands and will provide in-kind support with valuable input and assistance in creating and testing the Tribal Court forms replication software and system, creating instructions/checklists for self-represented litigants, and further assist with project outreach and education for community agencies and community members who may benefit from resources created under project funding.

The Leech Lake and White Earth Band of Ojibwe Legal Departments are the legal offices for the respective Bands, and along with the Tribal Courts will provide in-kind support with critical input and assistance in creating and testing the Tribal Court forms replication software and system, creating instructions/checklists for self-represented litigants, and further assist with project outreach and education for community agencies and community members who may benefit from resources created under project funding.

Project supporter State Support will bring significant successful prior document assembly project knowledge to the team providing in-kind assistance in a variety of ways. State Support has offered availability as needed to provide guidance and input throughout project implementation. State Support has further agreed to assist with project outreach, posting links to the online resources on statewide legal services websites frequently visited by community members who may benefit from resources created.

All partners will work collaboratively as a team to ensure project success and maximize the helpfulness and benefits of these vital and sorely needed resources for low-income community members in need. Letters of commitment from the White Earth Tribal Court, White Earth Legal Department, Leech Lake Tribal Court, and Leech Lake Legal Department, along with a Letter of Project Support from State Support are included in the appendix.

5. Replication

a. There are eleven (11) federally recognized Indian reservations located throughout the State of Minnesota. A significant number of these reservations contain staggeringly high levels of poverty, especially the seven (7) Anishinabe reservations located in the central and northern sections of Minnesota. As with White Earth and Leech Lake, there are very few private attorneys providing pro bono or low bono legal services to community members with legal matters before the Tribal Courts. On the whole, there are very few attorneys even licensed to practice before the Tribal Courts in Minnesota. Legal services program resources are limited statewide, and when reservation community members are unable

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to secure legal aid assistance, most are forced to attempt to proceed through the Tribal Court systems unrepresented with little to no resources available to assist.

There are currently no online document assembly resources in existence for any of the Tribal Courts in Minnesota. A significant number of the Bands do not post their pro se court forms online, several do not even post their legal codes online, often requiring self-represented litigants facing significant transportation obstacles to physically travel long distances to even begin trying to commence (or respond) to the legal matter in need of dispute before the Tribal Court.

This major barrier to accessing justice is not just prevalent throughout ALS' service area, but throughout the State of Minnesota as a whole. Establishing a successful document assembly project for the Leech Lake and White Earth Tribal Courts is likely to encourage other Tribal Courts to consider similar projects for their low-income community members. Some reservation communities, such as Red Lake and Mille Lacs are currently receiving, or have recently received legal services from ALS. ALS plans to take valuable lessons learned from implementing this project in collaboration with the White Earth and Leech Lake Bands and apply for funding to create and implement similar projects for self-represented litigants with legal matters in need of dispute before the Red Lake and Mille Lacs Band Tribal Courts. If approved for funding and if the Bands are interested in collaborating (as White Earth and Leech Lake are) ALS is confident that we can create and implement a successful replication project for more reservation community members and Tribal Courts.

For Bands located a significant distance from ALS' service area, ALS plans to reach out to other legal services providers in Minnesota in their reservation areas to encourage them to help the Bands create similar replication projects. ALS will offer significant in-kind support and assistance to other legal services providers to bring these crucial resources to more reservation community members and Tribal Courts.

The ultimate goal is to have all eleven (11) Tribal Courts in Minnesota fully implementing these (or similar) vital online resources for self-represented litigants with legal matters in need of dispute before the Tribal Courts.

Furthermore, there are significant numbers of Tribal Courts and Tribal communities without access to these resources nationwide, and ALS will both encourage and provide helpful assistance to other Tribal Courts, legal services providers, and others looking to replicate our successes assisting self-represented litigants before the Leech Lake and White Earth Tribal Courts.

b. While similar online document assembly resources are currently operational within the State of Minnesota, due to variations in Tribal Court codes and forms, they are only available for legal matters before the state courts and not the Tribal Courts. ALS plans to replicate prior successful document assembly projects, both within the State of Minnesota and nationwide to bring these important resources and valuable lessons learned from prior projects to the Leech Lake and White Earth Reservation communities. Currently, there are virtually no established approaches for assisting self-represented litigants before the White Earth and Leech Lake Tribal Courts. What established approaches do exist consist mostly of the existence of pro se forms (which aren't even publically available for White Earth community members who must physically travel to the Tribal Court to request them).

While resources vary throughout the many reservation and Tribal Court systems within the United States, there are very few Tribal Courts that have instituted the replication innovations as proposed here, and it is likely that many LSC funded programs throughout the United States will be interested in replicating our Tribal Court specific project to bring similar resources to reservation communities within their service area. A significant number of reservations and reservation community members face similar access to

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justice barriers as community members to be served under this project. The significant value of resources created under this project will provide similar significant value to self-represented litigants with matters in need of dispute before Tribal Courts nationwide.

c. This project is easily replicable because it replicates successful document assembly projects already in place at minimal cost while providing a tremendous amount of meaningful assistance and resources to low-income reservation community members where such resources do not currently exist. All documents replicated through this project will be available for further replication by other court systems, Tribal and non-Tribal. We will happily share lessons learned, outcomes, and provide assistance as requested to any other programs or court systems seeking input from our experiences in creating and maintaining this project. It is likely to serve as a model project encouraging other Tribal Courts throughout the State of Minnesota and nationwide to further replicate expanding similar resources to other Tribes, Tribal members, and Tribal Courts. Further replication/modification can be done at a low cost for use in any other jurisdiction.

d. This project proposes to replicate prior successful TIG document assembly projects to Tribal Courts and reservation community members with legal matters in need of dispute before the Leech Lake and White Earth Tribal Courts. The new component of project is that the replication is geared for Tribal Court matters, which due to lack of uniformity of codes and court forms are not proper for existing state court document assembly projects. In Minnesota, for example, document assembly resources that exist for family law matters can only be utilized for matters before Minnesota state courts. It is likely that other Tribal Courts, both within the State of Minnesota and nationwide will see and understand the tremendous benefits these resources bring to self-represented litigants before the Leech Lake and White Earth Tribal Courts, as well as the precious resources it preserves for the Tribal Courts, and seek to further replicate materials created to fit their own Tribal laws and court procedures. ALS will be thrilled to provide assistance as needed to help bring these crucial resources to as many Tribal Courts throughout the nation as possible.

6. Program capacity and the project staffing

ALS has a long and extensive history of successfully securing grant funding from various sources, federal and state, private and public, as well as managing and overseeing large scale projects dating back to our program's original founding in 1967. ALS additionally has had recent success with these endeavors under current ALS management, board, and staff.

ALS currently receives annual funding support from LSC, and is operating under a three year grant term; the longest grant term available for LSC funded programs.

ALS currently receives \$26,000 in annual state discretionary funding awarded by the Minnesota Supreme Court for 2014 and 2015 (applied for and approved in 2013).

ALS is currently collaborating with the Minnesota Council on Crime and Justice for their crime victim grant with funding from the United States Department of Justice. The Council on Crime and Justice asked ALS to oversee the Tribal component of the statewide project (1/3 of the total project) and has contracted with ALS for \$95,000 to implement the Tribal component. Through project planning, ALS has successfully established a Tribal advisory board and held meetings every 1-2 months for project implementation planning purposes. Advisory board members include representatives from Tribal law enforcement, Indian Child Welfare, domestic advocacy programs serving Tribal communities, Tribal attorneys, Tribal Court judges, private attorneys representing Tribal members, and many more. ALS has played a significant role in project planning, and will play a critical role in the first year of implementation expected to begin in November 2014 (with funding available for a second and third year of implementation at the discretion of the Department of Justice).

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ALS has been recently recognized by the United States Department of Justice, the National Criminal Justice Association, and the National American Indian Court Judges Association for a successful collaborative project with the Leech Lake Tribal Court serving at-risk youth on the Leech Lake Reservation with delinquency and truancy offenses. This successful collaboration has been in place for over the past three and a half years, and ALS has received more than \$100,000 in subcontractor funding from NARF over this time to provide legal assistance to at-risk youth before the Leech Lake Tribal Court. Project coordinator and attorney Cody Nelson has performed presentations on this collaborative project over the past year upon request/invitations from the National Criminal Justice Association, the National American Indian Court Judges Association, and the Minnesota Legal Services Coalition. Requested presentation topics involved providing education to organization management on how to build and maintain successful collaborative projects.

ALS has recently secured additional funding from a variety of sources for a variety of different projects serving our community, including the Minnesota Chapter of the Federal Bar Association, the WCA Foundation, the Red Lake Band of Ojibwe Child Support office, the White Earth Tribal Court, and the Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe. ALS has the demonstrated organizational capacity and expertise to oversee this collaborative document assembly replication project.

The White Earth Tribal Court, White Earth Legal Department, Leech Lake Tribal Court, and Leech Lake Legal Department all hold a wealth of understanding regarding Tribal Court laws and procedures, community needs/challenges, and all other applicable knowledge required for successful project implementation.

The Minnesota Legal Services State Support Center is the main technological and support center for all LSC funded programs in Minnesota, and holds significant applicable knowledge necessary for successful project implementation. In addition to successfully creating and implementing similar document assembly projects geared towards Minnesota state courts, State Support has recently successfully implemented many other technological projects for legal services programs in Minnesota, including online intake and statewide online pro bono legal advice and assistance.

ALS staff has the requisite capacity, qualifications, and experience to successfully manage and oversee the project. The main ALS staff member responsible for grant management, Cody Nelson, is the Co-Executive Director of Anishinabe Legal Services and has experience building and maintaining successful collaborative projects (including the above described collaborative project with the Leech Lake Tribal Court serving community youth). Cody Nelson applied for a scholarship from LSC to attend the 2014 TIG conference which was approved. At the conference, Cody had the opportunity to attend many informative education sessions involving document assembly. He also was fortunate to network with many legal services program representatives, court personnel, and IT professionals from around the country to learn more about document assembly projects. Conference participants were extraordinarily generous with answering many assorted questions and sharing many helpful tips and best practices for creating and implementing a document assembly replication project.

With the bountiful information provided at the TIG conference, representatives from the White Earth Tribal Court, White Earth Legal Department, Leech Lake Tribal Court, and Leech Lake Legal Department were all consulted regarding initial project planning ideas. Each representative provided additional valuable input to help further define project planning. Next, local IT providers were researched and consulted to gain additional understanding on project feasibility, to finalize initial project planning, and to gauge interest and capacity to partner on project plans. Design Anger, Inc. provided tremendous amounts of applicable knowledge and assistance on key technology issues and questions, and ALS proposes to utilize their services as a 3rd party contractor to provide technical assistance.

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ALS board members and program staff provided additional input and ideas for project planning, which was incorporated. Finally, State Support provided additional feedback to help finalize project plans as proposed herein, and pledged to provide continued in-kind assistance throughout project as described above.

While Co-Executive Director Cody Nelson will provide a significant amount of the required work under project for ALS, he will be assisted by program staff attorney Sarah Stahelin. Sarah will provide additional assistance with required substantive legal work (including creation of checklists/instructions, and substantive law considerations in software replication for Tribal law and procedure compliance) as well as with outreach and training.

Sarah has substantial legal experience representing community members before the White Earth and Leech Lake Tribal Courts. She has practiced civil law before the Tribal Courts for over ten (10) years, covering the vast majority of substantive legal areas to be replicated under project plans. She is well known, liked, and respected by the communities to be served and has established great working relationships with project partners and numerous agencies throughout the Leech Lake and White Earth Reservations.

Gregg Trautwein is ALS' Financial Administrator. He is a CPA with over twenty years of experience in providing financial administration services for legal services programs. Gregg and Cody work closely together to ensure that ALS is in full compliance with all fiscal and programmatic requirements for every funding source ALS receives.

The total time commitments for each of these persons when combined with all non-TIG related program duties, obligations, and responsibilities will not exceed 1.0 FTE. ALS Co-Executive Director Cody Nelson and ALS Financial Administrator Gregg Trautwein will closely monitor all activities to ensure compliance with this requirement.

Resumes for Cody, Sarah, and Gregg are included in the appendix. ALS has sufficient staff time to undertake all duties and responsibilities as pledged in this application.

7. Past performance

ALS has never received a prior TIG award.

8. Sustainability of the project

Ongoing costs for the project two (2) years out from the completion of the grant will be very minimal. The resources created under project will be located on existing websites already maintained outside of project. Outreach and education efforts will be completed over the duration of the grant term as pledged, and any necessary further outreach and education two (2) years out from grant funding will be very negligible. Further outreach and education for project services also fall under ALS' overall program goals and objectives, and alternative non-LSC funding sources may be utilized if necessary for continued outreach and education (including our steady stream of Minnesota state legislative funding appropriated through Minnesota statute, and private funding sources). Project partners and community agencies will also continue outreach and education on an indefinite basis.

There are no further staffing requirements projected two (2) years out from grant funding; staffing assistance will only entail providing client legal services utilizing resources created under project (i.e. providing limited services under program priorities for eligible client applicants) and continued in-kind support from project partners and community agencies.