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for Equal Justice

LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

**SPECIAL REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTENT
TO MANAGE LSNTAP SERVICES
FOR THE LEGAL AID COMMUNITY**

August 25, 2020

Introduction

This special notice for letters of intent (LOI) seeks responses from existing LSC basic field grantees interested in managing the Legal Services National Technology Assistance Project (LSNTAP). LSNTAP provides training and technical assistance to LSC-funded organizations to enhance their use of technology. This funding opportunity will support two years of LSNTAP services, and the applicant pool is limited to existing LSC basic field grantees. LSC will award the LSNTAP project as a grant under the Technology Initiative Grants (TIG) program, and the successful applicant will be subject to the rules and requirements of that program. More information about the TIG program is available in the [2020 TIG Request for Letters of Intent to Apply for Grant Funding](#) and the [2020 Technology Initiative Grants Application Instructions for 2020 Grant Funding](#).

Funding requests should encompass the following resources and services:

- A full-time LSNTAP staff member (or contractor/contractor team working under the grantee's supervision) to manage the LSNTAP project;
- An annual webinar training series for the legal services community;
- Additional support (e.g., interns and fellows) and management oversight of the project;
- Maintenance and technology enhancements for the LSNTAP.org platform;
- When the nation's public health status permits, travel to annual conferences so that LSNTAP can provide on-site training and technical assistance to the legal services field; and
- Additional expenses necessary to support creative and effective uses of technology at LSC grantees across the country.

The budget range for this funding opportunity is approximately \$300,000 - \$375,000. The deadline for LOI submissions is September 25, 2020. LSC will invite full proposals based on the quality of submissions and intends to make a final funding decision by November 2020. The selected organization will begin performance around December 2020.

Background

When the TIG program began in the early 2000s, there was a clear need to provide technology-focused technical assistance to TIG recipients, many of which had not previously undertaken major technology work. LSC has continued supporting LSNTAP through TIG awards to LSC field grantees to manage the LSNTAP project and deliver technical assistance to the national community of LSC-funded providers. Since 2011, the Northwest Justice Project has led this effort. LSC will compete the LSNTAP project broadly to all LSC grantees this year.

LSNTAP's core resources and services have remained the constant over the past several years. They include: maintaining a popular email group, posting best practices and practical resources on LSNTAP.org, organizing an annual webinar series, curating hundreds of archived training videos, and supporting services that provide one-on-one assistance to LSC grantees. All of these services are discussed in detail below. In the past, a full-time professional has staffed LSNTAP with additional support from part-time employees, fellows, and interns. NJP and LSC will work with the selected organization to transition these services and resources so that the selected organization can continue them under the new grant.

LSNTAP's services align with the goals of the TIG program, a 20-year-old grant program to support self-help and information technology at LSC-funded providers across the country. This includes client-facing self-help tools and information, along with projects that enhance internal technology efficiency. While the primary audience for LSNTAP is the 132 LSC grantees, the service also supports and promotes TIG-funded initiatives that impact the state and national community, such as the statewide website network and StatesideLegal.org.

Detailed Description of the LSNTAP Project

The successful applicant will be able to support, update, and improve the core LSNTAP services. These include:

- Fifteen email lists (now also Google web forums) including the very popular LSNTAP group;
- Hundreds of resources available on the www.LSNTAP.org blog and tech library, which require ongoing review and curation;
- A webinar series of at least ten free webinars on technology topics each year;
- Over a hundred training videos (mainly archived webinars) available on the [LSNTAP YouTube channel](#), including 22 videos that users viewed more than 1000 times; and
- One-on-one help for LSC grantees through direct phone support, online chat, and email.

The following subsections include more detailed descriptions of each component. In addition to these core services and resources, LSC welcomes creative and innovative ideas for better delivering technology training and technical assistance to the legal services community. LSC will ask applicants to highlight these ideas if invited to submit a full proposal.

Email List/Google Group

LSNTAP manages fifteen email lists (now available through email and web-based Google Group forums) covering a range of technology topics. The primary list that LSNTAP hosts and moderates is the LSNTAP group. The group has long been a discussion hub for the legal services technology community. It currently has over 800 subscribers representing many groups within the legal services and broader access to justice community. In 2018, list subscribers posted over 900 messages on a variety of topics, including Office 365, AI, security, mobile websites, phone systems, online intake and triage, along with news stories, RFPs, and events of interest to the community.

Part of LSNTAP's role is to actively manage the web forum. LSNTAP staff will need to review and approve requests to join the email list and monitor posts to ensure that materials are relevant and appropriate for the legal services community.

LSNTAP Website & Toolkits

The LSNTAP.org website launched in 2007 and has been a central platform for the legal services technology community over the past 13 years. In 2018, the website received 32,000 visits. It hosts more than 500 pieces of content covering a variety of topics relevant to LSC-funded organizations -- e.g., cloud security, mobile websites, document assembly, and project management. Subsites and subsections of the site include CMS features, the tech library, and the blog.

The previous project team completed a redesign of the LSNTAP.org website in early 2019. The website is currently built in Drupal 7 and is part of the Open Advocate platform. Applicants should plan to continue

refining the look-and-feel, content, and functionality of the LSNTAP.org website over the course of the two-year project.

Two specific examples of necessary content improvements are:

- Updated case management systems resources – Case management systems are essential technology applications for legal services providers. The [current CMS material on LSNTAP.org](#) has not been updated in several years and lacks the level of detail necessary for organizations considering CMS solutions. The successful applicant will need to update these materials over the course of the grant.
- Maintaining and expanding the toolkits – Funding through the Michigan Advocacy Project supported the development of [four detailed toolkits](#) on different technology topics for the legal aid community. Additionally, grantees in Atlanta and Vermont plan on releasing a fifth toolkit on web accessibility in the near future. LSNTAP applicants should ensure that these toolkits are prominently displayed on the LSNTAP website. Additionally, applicants should plan on developing two to three additional toolkits for the legal services community throughout this project.

Finally, the successful applicant will need to create a stronger categorization system for information on the site. Right now, key content pieces are not in an organized library, and the successful applicant will need to develop an improved information architecture so that users can more easily access key resources.

Webinar Training Series

Each year, LSNTAP hosts at least 10 - 15 formal webinar trainings for the community. These free trainings enable experts to share information and take questions from many people at once. In 2018, LSNTAP webinars averaged 30 attendees each, with some exceeding 100 participants. Additionally, trainings are recorded and posted to LSNTAP's YouTube channel so that more people can access them on-demand (LSNTAP's videos currently have over 237,000 views, an increase of 40,000 from 2017). There are presently 1003 subscribers to the LSNTAP YouTube channel.

The successful applicant should continue this webinar series, with an emphasis on improving marketing to LSC grantees. The funding range provided above -- approximately \$300,000 - \$375,000 for the total project -- assumes funding for up to 30 webinars at up to \$2000 each. In the past, each year of the grant term LSNTAP has issued an RFP to organizations that may be interested in producing and presenting these webinars, then worked with LSC to make the final selection for that year.

LSNTAP YouTube Channel

LSNTAP hosts over a hundred training videos (mainly archived webinars) available on the LSNTAP YouTube channel, including 22 videos that users have viewed more than 1000 times. The selected organization will manage this channel and determine how to effectively promote helpful video resources.

One-on-one help for LSC grantees through direct phone support, online chat, and email.

LSNTAP offers limited direct technical assistance and technology support to LSC grantees and TIG-funded initiatives such as statewide websites. The help usually involves getting an organization going in

the right direction on a technology initiative. For example, LSNTAP may connect an organization seeking to upgrade its phone system with other LSC grantees that successfully completed similar upgrades, along with existing resources such as checklists and sample RFPs. Organizations generally request assistance through email, a phone call, or an online chat system. LSC will work with the selected organization to determine a reasonable number of technical assistance hours it can offer the community, along with the best system for organizations to request help.

Submission Requirements

All LOI responses will use LSC's existing LSC Grants system. The LOI requirements are outlined in the [LSC Request for Letters of Intent to Apply for 2020 Grant Funding](#) notice issued earlier this year. As discussed in that notice, applicants must provide narrative responses to the five prompts below. Applicants should be mindful of each field's character limits and try to adapt their responses to fit a national project.

1. Description of Project
2. Major Benefits
3. Estimated Costs
4. Major Partners
5. Innovation/Replication

Questions

Please submit questions relating to this LOI notice by email to David Bonebrake at dbonebrake@lsc.gov, no later than 5:30 pm EDT, on Friday, September 11, 2020. LSC will post all questions and responses on the [TIG section of the LSC website](#) by Thursday, September 17. Interested LSC grantees can also reach out to NJP's Director of Administration Sue Encherman – suee@nwjustice.org – for more information about that organization's experience with the project. Finally, TIG staff are also willing to discuss the project with potential applicants and will try to document questions answered during these conversations as part of the information we share with all applications. Please contact Techgrants@lsc.gov or your regional TIG administrator.

Decision Time Frame

LSC will invite full proposals to those applicants it believes have a reasonable chance of success in a competitive grant process. LSC intends to send these invitations by early October with a full proposal deadline of early November. LSC plans to decide on funding by late November, and the grant would start on or around December 2020.