

Legal Services Corporation	Technology Initiative Grants
Legal Assistance Foundation (514020)	TIG # 13041

Project Narrative

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

LAF will develop a secure enterprise-level information and knowledge management system based on Microsoft SharePoint 2013. As this is a replication effort of Northwest Justice Project's own TIG-funded project, we will be able to take advantage of much of the work that has already been done.

Our decision to choose SharePoint was based on a number of factors. We want the main interface to be web based so that it will work across a number of different devices. Our network infrastructure is based on Microsoft's Active Directory, so the capability to integrate with it is required. Also, since many other legal services organizations are using SharePoint, we will have community support. To take full advantage of SharePoint's collaboration features, we will be integrating it with Microsoft Office Web Apps, a browser-based office productivity suite.

SharePoint is offered in two forms: software hosted locally or online as a cloud service. Because LAF has the staff and infrastructure to maintain additional servers, we are choosing to maintain a local installation for cost, availability, and security reasons. Due to our highly virtualized environment, the hardware requirements are flexible. We will purchase new servers and/or upgrade existing ones to accommodate the new system. The SharePoint software and licenses will be acquired at a discount through TechSoup.

One of the key features in our SharePoint system will be a fully indexed and searchable document repository. Instead of relying on a few individual staff to manually maintain collections of documents in folders (which invariably fall into disuse), we will use SharePoint to process and include documents in an organized system automatically. Setting this up involves developing a set of metadata "tags" used to describe documents, such as the fields of law they concern, or the judge assigned to a case. Because the choice of terms is crucial to having a useful and intuitive system, we will have a consultant work with us to design the system and prevent it from becoming unwieldy.

An important feature of this project is SharePoint's integration with LegalServer, our case management system. This integration will allow a user to save a document in the SharePoint system and have the same document saved in LegalServer as well, simply by typing in the LegalServer number of the case profile or the community engagement profile where the document is to be saved. The system will automatically fill in selected fields from LegalServer in SharePoint (such as client name, legal problem code, court, community organization name, type of presentation, and county) so that users can then use these fields to search for the document in the future. This integration will also allow a user to save a document in LegalServer and have the same document saved in the SharePoint library simultaneously. Users will move seamlessly from SharePoint to LegalServer and back again, and LAF will have a database of documents readily available to all staff.

The SharePoint system will give us the flexibility for further development as the needs of LAF grow and change, much as we have been able to modify LegalServer to suit our needs since we implemented it in 2009. Although beyond the scope of this project, we eventually will include wiki sites within our SharePoint system for each of our work groups, which will be easy for staff to navigate and update, and will be repositories of information such as best practices, tool kits for handling specific legal issues, and internet resources. We also will include a calendaring system within SharePoint to manage all the client appointments, community engagement events and staff schedules that LAF manages now through Outlook. The SharePoint calendaring system allows multiple calendars to be overlaid on top of one

Legal Services Corporation	Technology Initiative Grants
Legal Assistance Foundation (514020)	TIG # 13041

another so that a user can see, at a glance, appointment calendars, staff schedules, and upcoming staff court dates.

In developing our SharePoint site, we will incorporate the model used in our LegalServer transition a few years ago. Because this system will be used throughout the agency, we will recruit a team of subject matter experts to assist with its development from day one. In addition to providing feedback for its design, this core group of people will gain the skills necessary to guide and train others in using SharePoint. Before deployment, we will work with our Director of Training to coordinate mandatory interactive at-desk training for all of our staff. After deployment, we will continue to assess usage and make changes to designs based on surveys and other feedback from staff.

In discussions with other programs, we have come to understand that it takes significant resources to maintain a SharePoint system. To address this issue, we will dedicate approximately 30% of one of our two computer specialists' time to "information management," which will include managing the SharePoint system. Our on-staff "information manager" will be involved in the design and implementation of the SharePoint system from day one. Once the project is completed, the information manager will be responsible for keeping SharePoint organized (with help from the subject matter experts), modifying workflows or developing new workflows, and generally maintaining the SharePoint system.

LAF's current strategic plan includes an initiative for "building and maintaining institutional knowledge through the effective use of technology." The resulting impact of this project will be to provide more extended representation to more clients and more community outreach to more client organizations. Ultimately, we expect to see an increase of 10-20% in the number of extended representation cases per FTE and a 10-20% increase in the number of community outreach events per FTE. Because we are the largest provider of civil legal aid in the Chicago area, and one of few providers of extended representation, these increases are critical to the legal aid delivery model in Cook County.

2. Need for the project

To objectively measure the need for this SharePoint project, we conducted a survey to determine what sources our advocates are using to search for information, as well as the amount of time they spend doing so. Results from our survey show that over 70% of staff who handle extended representation cases use email or our current shared directory to search for briefs, motions, memoranda, letters and other documents that could be useful in the cases they are litigating. Both methods are cumbersome and inefficient when compared to SharePoint. Email involves time spent by the sender to write and send the email, time spent by all the recipients of the email to review and respond, and then time spent by the sender to review all the responses received. Email also is an imperfect mechanism for gathering documents because the sender cannot be certain of contacting all possible sources of information, and not everyone with relevant information will respond to the query. Similarly, our current shared directory offers only rudimentary search capabilities so users see only a portion of the relevant documents that exist.

Survey results also show that 68% of staff spend up to five hours per month, and an additional 28% of staff spend up to 10 hours per month, searching for documents they can use in their current cases. More than 40% of staff spend up to twenty hours per month, and an additional 17% of staff spend up to thirty hours per month, writing their own documents rather than adapting a document that already exists. Some of them say they use their own documents as a template (which is better than starting from scratch each time), but this leads them to miss the opportunity to see if someone else has developed a better model.

In addition, currently, staff who are collaborating on a document must "take turns" adding their respective sections and edits to the document. This is time-consuming and sometimes leads to multiple versions of a document in circulation at the same time, which can be confusing and difficult to correct. SharePoint will

Legal Services Corporation	Technology Initiative Grants
Legal Assistance Foundation (514020)	TIG # 13041

provide a collaborative workspace so that multiple staff can create and modify a single document simultaneously.

Once we complete this project, LAF will have a system that provides a truly collaborative workspace as well as a comprehensive knowledge-management system that is easy to search. We expect the outcome of having this system will be to give our staff the ability to represent more clients and provide community outreach to more client groups, and to produce higher quality documents in a more effective, efficient manner.

This project responds to one of LSC's areas of interest for 2013, namely, Key Initiatives from LCS's 2012-2013 Summit on the Use of Technology to Expand Access to Justice. The idea behind this project is that it will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of LAF's services to clients by increasing the quantity and quality of services provided.

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 goal of this project is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of LAF's client services by streamlining LAF's workflows, communication and information management, so that LAF staff can represent more clients in extended representation cases and provide more community groups with useful legal information. We will use SharePoint Enterprise 2013 to provide advocates with a truly collaborative workspace which will enhance the collaboration process and allow staff to save and retrieve documents quickly. We will integrate SharePoint with our case management system, LegalServer, to provide a powerful information management system so that staff will produce higher quality documents more quickly. We expect to see a 10-20% increase in the number of extended representation cases per FTE and a 10-20% increase in the number of community outreach events per FTE.

The first objective of this project is to design the overall structure of the SharePoint system for LAF, taking into account identified workflows. LAF's core group of staff responsible for leading the SharePoint project will work with Mark Pace and SeyfarthLean Consulting (SLC) to achieve this objective.

The second objective is to create the architecture, structure and taxonomy for the SharePoint system. LAF will continue to work with Mr. Pace to achieve this objective. LAF's SharePoint core group, as well as pilot groups of staff from LAF's work groups, will test the system and provide feedback.

The third objective is to integrate SharePoint with LegalServer. LAF and Mr. Pace will work with IV Ashton and other staff at PSTI to achieve this objective. This integration combines the power of SharePoint search functions with the vast amount of information stored in LegalServer.

The fourth objective is to train staff and roll out the system. After we test and revise the system, LAF will develop a master plan for training staff which will include input from Mr. Pace, the SharePoint core group, and LAF's Director of Training.

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

The first objective is to design the overall structure of the SharePoint system for LAF, taking into account identified workflows. LAF's core group of staff responsible for leading the SharePoint project will work

Legal Services Corporation	Technology Initiative Grants
Legal Assistance Foundation (514020)	TIG # 13041

with Mark Pace and SeyfarthLean Consulting to achieve this objective. The strategies and activities that we will undertake to achieve this objective include: a) educating our SharePoint consultant, Mark Pace, about LAF's structure, staff, work, and workflows; b) consulting SeyfarthLean about work flows and processes in place in our Practice Groups (which SeyfarthLean will obtain pursuant to an analysis they are doing of our Practice Groups, which is being funded by a different grant); c) involving a dedicated IT staff person as "information manager" to work with Mark Pace to design the structure of the SharePoint system; and d) training IT staff on SharePoint development, by having these individuals attend SharePoint training.

The second objective is to create the architecture, structure and taxonomy for the SharePoint system. LAF will continue to work with Mark Pace to achieve this objective. LAF's SharePoint core group, as well as pilot groups of staff from LAF's work groups, will test the system and provide feedback. The strategies and activities that we will undertake to achieve this objective include: a) creating a SharePoint architecture that corresponds with the workflows in our Practice Groups as identified by SeyfarthLean; b) reviewing the taxonomy used by the Northwest Justice Project in its SharePoint system; c) interviewing and surveying LAF staff to help design LAF's taxonomy; d) testing and revising the taxonomy after obtaining feedback from staff; e) designing and developing an efficient User Experience and Information Architecture (UX/IA) to enable LAF staff to easily find and add valuable content to SharePoint.

The third objective is to integrate SharePoint with LegalServer. LAF and Mark Pace will work with IV Ashton and other staff at PS Technologies, Inc. This integration will combine the power of SharePoint search functions with the vast amount of information stored in LegalServer. The strategies and activities we will undertake to achieve this objective include: a) working with PSTI to create an application programming interface (API) to share documents and metadata between SharePoint and LegalServer; b) building metadata filters for SharePoint so that the most commonly used fields in LegalServer are searchable; c) designing and developing additional custom web services for SharePoint to integrate with LegalServer; d) testing the document sharing and search functions in SharePoint and LegalServer with the core group and one or more pilot groups; e) surveying LAF staff to determine how well the integration system is working; and f) revising the functions and features in SharePoint to take into account feedback from the testing.

The fourth objective is to train LAF staff and roll out the system. After we test and revise the system, LAF will develop a master plan for training staff which will include input from Mark Pace, the SharePoint core group and LAF's Director of Training. The strategies and activities we will undertake to achieve this objective include: a) training all staff on SharePoint in person in small groups or by using a web-conferencing system; b) employing the LAF core group and various pilot testers to train other staff; c) creating short (three to four minutes) "how-to" videos about key SharePoint functionality; d) creating a SharePoint wiki available through SharePoint, which will explain how to use SharePoint and will include best practices and expectations for use of SharePoint by all staff.

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

LAF will enlist SeyfarthLean Consulting, a subsidiary of the law firm Seyfarth Shaw LLP, which provides efficiency models for in-house legal departments and other business units of a company. SeyfarthLean has already provided, pro bono, a business evaluation of our Client Screening Unit, LAF's registration and intake department, so that we can become more efficient in the way we register and intake new clients. LAF has received a grant to hire SeyfarthLean to do a similar analysis of two of its five Practice Groups, beginning in July 2013. As part of the analysis of our Practice Groups, SeyfarthLean will evaluate the work flows and processes used by advocates who handle extended representation cases.

Legal Services Corporation	Technology Initiative Grants
Legal Assistance Foundation (514020)	TIG # 13041

During the design phase of this project, we will use the detailed information from SeyfarthLean’s analysis of the Practice Groups’ work flows to ensure the development of the optimal design of LAF’s SharePoint system. SeyfarthLean will provide a baseline analysis of LAF’s newly designed SharePoint system, which will include a recommendation of data points to collect and reports to be designed and produced on a scheduled basis. We will then use SeyfarthLean’s analysis as a reference point for measuring improvements provided by the fully implemented system.

LAF also will conduct in-depth interviews and surveys of staff during the project to gauge the effectiveness of the system and pinpoint areas where improvements need to be made. We will conduct the first survey after the initial structure and taxonomy is developed to get feedback from staff about the organization of the system and the terms used in the system. We will conduct a second survey after the integration between SharePoint and LegalServer is set up so that we can evaluate how the system is working for staff. We will conduct a third survey after we have trained our staff and the SharePoint system has been fully implemented so that we can gather final data about the system and the implementation of the system.

Finally, LAF will enlist the core group of staff who are working on this project and other staff to test various functionality in the system as it is designed. The core group and other pilot testers will report their experiences, and we will further refine the system based on the user experiences.

4. Justice community partnerships

Illinois is a national leader in using technology in the delivery of legal services. LAF is the largest provider of civil legal services in the Chicago area, and one of the few civil legal aid programs that provides extended representation as well as community outreach. One of LAF’s two partners in this project, Mark Pace of Nuvem, Inc., is familiar with legal services organizations and the work we do. This project will strengthen justice community partnerships by involving Mr. Pace, who has demonstrated his expertise in developing SharePoint systems for the Northwest Justice Project, Atlanta Legal Aid Services, and others, and who will likely continue to provide this expertise to other legal services programs in the future. In addition, Mr. Pace has an ongoing relationship with PS Technologies, Inc., the developers of LegalServer and LAF’s second partner in this project.

LAF’s second partner in this project, PS Technologies, Inc. (PSTI), will work with LAF and Mr. Pace to integrate LegalServer with SharePoint. The modifications made to LegalServer for this project can be adopted by any of the other programs across the country that use LegalServer. This will strengthen partnerships in the broader justice community. LAF has an excellent working relationship with PSTI, having worked with PSTI to implement LegalServer and on two TIG projects: TIG 11089 to develop a statewide Online Access system, and TIG 12059 to develop a collaborative data mapping system. For both projects, the goal is to implement a system that is workable for all three LSC-funded Illinois programs, with the vision of expanding the systems to other, non-LSC funded Illinois programs that use LegalServer in the future.

Finally, both Prairie State Legal Services (PSLS) and Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation (LOLLAF) have expressed interest in this project and will be watching it closely. Because LAF, PSLS and LOLLAF have been partnering on other projects involving LegalServer for the past two years, it is likely that the SharePoint system adopted by LAF could serve as a model for both PSLS and LOLLAF in the future.

5. Replication

LAF is replicating TIG 11076 awarded to the Northwest Justice Project (NJP), but at a significantly lower cost. NJP was awarded \$92,350 for TIG 11076 two years ago. LAF is seeking only \$75,500 for this

Legal Services Corporation	Technology Initiative Grants
Legal Assistance Foundation (514020)	TIG # 13041

project, because both LAF and its project partners, Mark Pace of Nuvem, Inc. and IV Ashton of PS Technologies, Inc. (PSTI), will adopt some of the basic architecture, taxonomy and programming that was done for the NJP system. PSTI is charging LAF \$10,000 for the programming work, which is less than half the \$24,900 charged to NJP. However, the taxonomy won't translate precisely from NJP to LAF, and there will be new architecture and programming to develop, in part because LAF will use SharePoint 2013 in its project rather than SharePoint 2010 to take advantage of the latest technology.

Developing an enterprise level knowledge management system is the way of the future. Using email to send out a request for templates or sample documents is a time-consuming and inadequate method for searching the available universe of documents. Saving documents in folders as opposed to "tagging" them so they can be found in subsequent searches is similarly slow and inefficient. Like LAF, many other legal services programs still use public folders or network shares to store documents, and could benefit tremendously from a true knowledge and information management system. Like NJP's project, this project also lends itself to replication in the future, and as a leader in the legal aid community, LAF is in a position to help other organizations in developing their own SharePoint systems.

6. Program capacity and the project staffing

LAF has sufficient capacity and staffing to undertake and successfully complete this project. LAF's Executive Director, Director of Technology for Advocates and IT Supervisor have been involved in the planning of this project from the outset. LAF initially requested proposals from three companies with SharePoint consultants: DMC, Inc., SWC Technology Partners, and Nuvem, Inc. We ultimately decided on Mark Pace of Nuvem, Inc., because of his experience developing for other legal services programs such as NJP and ALAS, as well as his competitive rate.

Beginning with the initial phase of this project, Vivian Hessel, LAF's Director of Technology for Advocates, Eric Fong, LAF's IT Supervisor, and LAF's two computer specialists will devote time to working with Mark Pace to design the basic architecture of the SharePoint system.

Vivian Hessel has successfully managed large projects for LAF in the past, including the transition from the Kemps case management system to the LegalServer case management system in 2008-2009. She represents LAF on the Illinois Statewide Website Stakeholders Committee and is the on-site LegalServer administrator for LAF. Vivian is leading the LAF teams involved in the Online Access TIG (11089) and the Collaborative Data Mapping TIG (12059), and will oversee the work on this project.

Eric Fong is responsible for managing LAF's technology network as well as supervising LAF's two computer specialists. Eric has made numerous improvements to LAF's network during the past several years, including the implementation of SharePoint Foundation 2010 in June 2012. Eric will work closely with Mark Pace on the implementation of SharePoint Enterprise 2013.

LAF anticipates that the two individuals named above will devote approximately 40 hours per month (combined) to this project during the 18 months of development and implementation.

LAF will reassign existing job responsibilities from one of LAF's two computer specialists so that this computer specialist can be the "information manager" for this project. The information manager will work on the design of the SharePoint system and ultimately maintain the system once we roll it out to staff. We anticipate that the time to be devoted by the information manager will be the equivalent of approximately 30% of a FTE both during the grant period and once this project is completed.

LAF anticipates that the information manager will devote approximately 50 hours per month to this project during the 18 months of development and implementation.

Legal Services Corporation	Technology Initiative Grants
Legal Assistance Foundation (514020)	TIG # 13041

Finally, LAF will select a group of representative staff from all of LAF’s practice groups to act as the SharePoint “core group” who will provide input during the design process, test the system as it is developed, and ultimately assist in training all staff when we roll out the system.

7. Past performance

LAF has had success administering and participating in several TIG projects.

TIG 10069 – Spanish language website.

LAF and its project partner, Illinois Legal Aid Online (ILAO), recently completed the final report for a TIG (10069) to develop a Spanish language website, www.AyudaLegalIL.org. The goal of this TIG was to increase access to the legal system for Spanish-speakers and enhance the ability of Illinois legal services programs to serve the lower-income Spanish-speaking population by developing a user-friendly Spanish language website. The website includes over 300 Spanish self-help legal resources in the more than twenty areas of law. It also lists referral information for over 80 legal organizations. As of February 28, 2013, the website had logged 76,071 visits and 126,870 pageviews.

TIG 11089 – Statewide Online Access System.

LAF is one of several project partners working on the Online Access TIG (11089). The other project partners are the two other Illinois LSC programs, Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation (LOLLAF), Prairie State Legal Services (PSLS), and the statewide website support organization, Illinois Legal Aid Online (ILAO). ILAO designed the system based on the rules written by the three LSC programs to address specific legal problems that all three programs agreed upon. The goal of the system is to direct priority clients and cases to the appropriate legal services program and to divert non-priority cases to self-help legal information and resources. In March 2013, we completed usability testing in which LAF clients (who were paid a \$20 stipend for their time) navigated through a prototype of the system based on a fictitious fact pattern for a particular legal problem. We gained valuable information from this process which informed our decisions to further refine the system. We are planning to roll out this system in the early fall of 2013.

TIG 12059 – Collaborative Data Mapping System.

LAF also is one of several project partners participating in a Collaborative Data TIG (12059). The other project partners include PSLS, LOLLAF, ILAO, the Illinois Equal Justice Foundation and PS Technologies, Inc. (PSTI) (the developers of LegalServer). The project partners have contracted with the Social Impact Research Center, an arm of Heartland Alliance, to help us select internal and external data points to include in the system and to then decide which data points will be mapped. PSTI is working on a tool that it will install in each program’s instance of LegalServer so that each program can import non-personally identifiable client data (race, gender, age, legal problem, etc.) to a statewide instance of LegalServer which will be used to generate reports.

LAF also worked with PSLS, LOLLAF, and Illinois Legal Aid Online on two other statewide TIG projects in 2004-05: the development of a HotDocs system (03305) and the development of a statewide legal services website (03306).

8. Sustainability of the project

In order to maintain the SharePoint system after completion of this project, the “information manager” who worked on the development and implementation of SharePoint will continue to devote 30% of his/her time to maintaining the SharePoint system. In addition, LAF’s Supervisor of IT and Director of Technology for Advocates will continue to implement new functionality in the SharePoint system to adapt it to the needs of LAF staff.