2021 PBIF FUNDING CYCLE RESOURCE GUIDE
PRE-APPLICATION

How to Use this Guide

This guide includes a Checklist and instructions for three sections of the Pro Bono Innovation Fund (PBIF) Pre-Application. The Checklist provides a roadmap to completing a 2021 Pro Bono Innovation Fund (PBIF) Pre-Application. The instructions cover the three sections of the 2021 Pre-Application that establish the substance of a grant proposal: Narrative questions; Budget, Staffing, and Leadership Plan; and the Budget. In addition to providing guidance that will help you complete each section, the instructions are color-coded to provide the following:

- Weight of the section in the Pre-Application review process (**red text**);
- Areas of Consideration, which are the questions reviewers use to score and assess responses for quality; (**blue text**)
- Location of the section in GrantEase (**green text**).

The instructions are designed to allow Applicant staff who are not licensed GrantEase users to develop substantive responses to each of the Pre-Application sections outside of GrantEase and in collaboration with your organization's licensed user(s). It also provides PBIF-specific guidance about the Pre-Application, which may be helpful for licensed GrantEase users. We encourage the people at your organization who are responsible for drafting your Pre-Application to use your shared file system outside of GrantEase before completing the Pre-Application in the system.

Draft Prepare each component of the Pre-Application using the PBIF Resource Guide.	☐ Review the resources on the PBIF page of the LSC website. ☐ Schedule a Technical Assistance Call with the PBIF Team. Click on the name to schedule a call: • Mytrang Nguyen, nguyenm@lsc.gov (North) • Anais Taboas, taboasa@lsc.gov (South) • Sandhya Kidd, kidds@lsc.gov (West) ☐ Complete your response to the narrative questions in a word processing document. Please limit your responses to 1-2 pages double spaced for each narrative question. • Project (p. 3) • Sustainability (p. 4) • Transformation (p. 5) ☐ Complete the Budget, Staffing, and Leadership Plan in a word processing document (p. 6) ☐ Complete the Budget in a spreadsheet and/or word processing document (p. 9)
GrantEase Work with your Organization's licensed GrantEase user to prepare your Pre-Application for submission.	☐ Watch the video and review the manual (www.lsc.gov) on the PBIF Pre-Application Tips on GrantEase • Check the spacing and formatting of your response before you save and validate forms in the system. • Follow the PBIF instructions for the *Budget Rationale* and *Staffing Rationale* questions which require a *"Not Applicable"* response in the Pre-Application. • Save your budget calculations in a separate document as certain fields in the Budget are auto-calculated by the system and will not allow you to enter data.
Submission	☐ PBIF Pre-Applications are due on or before **11:59 pm EST on March 15, 2021**. ☐ Late or Incomplete Submission will not be accepted unless you have emailed the Pro Bono Innovation Fund at probonoinnovation@lsc.org prior to the due date. Please see the Federal Register notice for further information on late submissions

Narrative Questions (60% of Pre-Application Score)

Responses to the following narrative questions will be entered in the ***Pre-Application Form*** in the ***Attachments Tab*** of the Pre-Application in GrantEase.

Listed below are the narrative questions for each Grant category. Listed **in blue** are the Areas of Consideration that reviewers use to score and assess responses for quality.

PROJECT GRANT PRE-APPLICATION NARRATIVE QUESTIONS AND AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

1. **Does your project involve direct services to clients?** (yes/no question)

➔ Yes

1a. Please describe your proposed project, the specific client need it will address, and how you plan to meet the need with pro bono resources.

- Does the Applicant present a thoughtfully designed project designed to leverage volunteer resources to assist clients with a specific legal need?
- Does the Applicant provide a clear description of the specific client and identify any gap(s) in services?
- Does the Applicant describe the role(s) and responsibilities for volunteers?
- Does the Applicant describe how the pro bono intervention described will impact the client need?

➔ No

1a. Please describe the issue or challenge in your pro bono efforts that this project will address and the proposed solution.

- Does the Applicant describe the challenge(s) in the pro bono delivery system that the project will address?
- Does the Applicant describe the impact of the challenge(s) on the Organization?
- Does the Applicant describe a thoughtfully designed solution based in modern, effective practices for legal aid pro bono?
- Does the Applicant describe how the proposed solution will address the challenge(s) described?

2. **If awarded, what impact would this project have on clients and/or your Organization, or the broader legal community?**
   - Does the Applicant describe what outputs are expected from the proposed project? (i.e., number of clients served or attorneys recruited)
   - Does the Applicant describe what outcomes are expected from the proposed project (i.e., higher levels of service for clients, higher levels of pro bono service for the organization, new relationships with the private bar or broader legal community, or project-specific outcomes)?
   - Does the Applicant describe how the proposed project fits with and/or is supported by services provided by the broader legal or social services community?
     Does the Applicant make connections between the proposed project and issues in pro bono that are important and timely to the legal aid community?

SUSTAINABILITY GRANT PRE-APPLICATION NARRATIVE QUESTIONS AND AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

1. **Does your Project involve direct services to clients?** (yes/no question)

→ Yes

1a. Describe your Pro Bono Innovation Fund Project and why you seek a Sustainability Grant. What has the Project accomplished for clients and client services?

- Does the Applicant present a thoughtfully designed project that leverages volunteer resources to assist clients with a specific, ongoing legal need?
- Does the Applicant provide a clear description of the ongoing specific client need using project data, local statistical information, and other data to identify the continued gap(s) in service?
- Does the Applicant describe the impact of the Project to date, supported by data and analysis as to whether the initial goals of the Project were achieved?
- Does the Applicant describe best practices in pro bono delivery that can be replicated by others?
- Does the Applicant describe program evaluation and data collection and how it is incorporated into the Project?

1b. How do you effectively use pro bono volunteers to address the ongoing client need?

- Does the Applicant detail a well-defined and meaningful role for pro bono volunteers in the Sustainability Grant Project, and where such a role is expanded, an explanation for the expansion?
- Does the Applicant describe the current level of engagement of pro bono volunteers?

→No

1a. Describe your Pro Bono Innovation Fund Project. How has it addressed an issue or challenge that allows you to serve clients with pro bono volunteers more effectively?

- Does the Applicant include key elements of the Project and use data to demonstrate how the Project improved the Pro Bono Program's efficacy and/or the overall Organization?
- Does the Applicant use statistical information or other metrics to demonstrate the Project's effectiveness in serving clients and the ongoing need?

2. **What will you accomplish with additional time and funding with a Sustainability Grant?**
   - Does the Applicant describe the goals for the Project with additional time and funding with a Sustainability Grant?

TRANSFORMATION PRE-APPLICATION
NARRATIVE QUESTIONS AND AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

1. **Describe your vision for a modern and high-impact pro bono program at your Organization.**
    - Does the Applicant's vision reflect modern, effective practices for legal aid pro bono?
    - Does the Applicant's vision have a strong connection with clients and the Organization's core advocacy efforts?
    - Does the Applicant's vision propose a new approach or collaboration with existing legal service providers and/or pro bono programs?

2. **Describe two to three immediate and short-term improvements you would like to make to your pro bono operations to help achieve your described vision.**
    - Is there a connection between the short-term performance improvements and the Applicant's vision?
    - Are the short-term improvements consistent with effective practices in pro bono delivery?

3. **Why is it an appropriate time for your Organization to transform your approach to pro bono?**
    - Does the Applicant make the case that the timing is appropriate for a significant, organization-wide change effort?
    - Does Applicant identify recent changes at the Organization that have influenced the decision to transform their approach to pro bono. (i.e., new management, organization-wide initiatives, changes in staff or reorganization, new strategic plan, board of directors' engagement, new technology systems, etc.)

Budget Staffing, and Leadership Plan (25% of Pre-Application Score)

Location in GrantEase: The Budget, Staffing, and Leadership Plan is a required part of the Pre-Application. Responses to the chart and questions listed below will be entered in the ***Budget, Staffing, and Leadership Plan Form***, which is in the ***Attachments Tab*** of the Pre-Application in GrantEase.

Areas of Consideration: Below and listed **in blue** are the Areas of Consideration that reviewers use to score and assess this section for quality:

Project and Sustainability Grants

- Does the Applicant identify and describe the project team and project partners?
- Does the staffing plan engage key staff who will be necessary for the project's success?
- *Additional consideration for Sustainability applicants:* If there is a change in staffing, has the Applicant explained the changes?

Transformation Grants

- Does the Applicant identify and describe the Transformation Grant team and other partners?
- Does the staffing plan engage key staff who will be necessary for a successful Pro Bono Transformation?

The Budget Staffing and Leadership Plan is an online form with three parts: 1) a chart; 2) two Budget Rational questions; and 3) two Staffing Rationale questions. Below are instructions for completing the three parts.

1. Chart

The chart allows Applicants to identify the full team of individuals with key responsibility for the success of their Project, Sustainability, or Transformation grant. This information is requested in the form of a chart with six "questions" about each individual. GrantEase users may add as many rows to the chart as necessary. Below is a sample of the chart with definitional guidance to assist with completing it:

Name	Title	Type	Description of Role	Rationale	FTE Time on Project

Name: Provide the first and last name of each individual with key responsibilities under the grant. For new or unfilled positions, you may enter *New Position* or *Vacant Position*.

Title: Provide the job title of the individual with key responsibilities under the grant.

Type: In GrantEase, this is a drop-down with the following three options:

- *Internal, Existing Position* for current employees of the Organization;
- *Internal, New Position* for employees of the organization who will be hired under the grant; *External* for individuals at partnering entities or Organizations;
- *External* may be used to designate board members of the Organization or others who are not employees. It may also designate individuals who will not receive compensation or funding under the grant, or who will receive funding under the grant as a subgrantee or contractor.

Description of Role: Brief description of the individual's position and responsibilities at the Organization or partnering entity. Please limit your response to approximately 2 – 4 sentences per individual.

Rationale: Brief description of the individual's role in the project or pro bono transformation and why they are important to the success of the grant. Please limit your response to approximately 2 – 4 sentences per individual.

FTE Time on the Project: In GrantEase, this is a drop-down with the following five options: *Less than .25 FTE; .25 FTE; .50 FTE; .75 FTE; 1 FTE*. These options are estimates of the amount of staffing dedicated to the grant. The *Budget* allows Applicants to be more precise and identify individuals who will be charging specific percentages of time to the grant or in-kind. For purposes of this question, if an existing staff attorney will be spending 75% of her time on the grant with 50% charged to the PBIF grant and 25% charged to other funding sources, the Applicant would select *.75 FTE* for that individual in the drop-down.

2. Budget Rationale

There are two questions (numbered 1. and 2.) under the Budget Rationale section. These questions will not be considered in the Pre-Application, but GrantEase requires a response in order to complete and submit the Pre-Application. Please write, *Not Applicable*, completing questions 1 and 2 as follows:

1. Where are you directing the highest percentage of funds from this grant?
Not Applicable
2. How does this support your desired objectives?
Not Applicable

3. Staffing Rationale

There are two questions (numbered 3. and 4.) located under the Staffing Rationale section. These questions will not be considered in the Pre-Application, but GrantEase requires a response. Please write, *Not Applicable,* completing questions 3 and 4 as follows:

4. Why did you choose to staff your grant effort as described above?
Not Applicable

5. How does your staffing support the grant efforts' objectives, activities, and outcomes?
Not Applicable

Budget (15% of Pre-Application Score)

Location in GrantEase: The Budget is a required part of the Pre-Application. The information to complete a Budget will be entered in the ***Budget Tab*** of the Pre-Application in GrantEase.

Areas of Consideration: Below and listed **in blue** are the Areas of Consideration that reviewers use to score and assess this section for quality:

Project and Sustainability Grants

- Does the budget support the project as described?
- Does the budget propose a reasonable and strategic focus for the Pro Bono Innovation Fund grant dollars?
- *Additional consideration for Sustainability applicants:* Does the Applicant propose to reduce the Pro Bono Innovation Fund contribution during a Sustainability Grant period?

Transformation Grants

- Does the budget include adequate resources to support the Transformation as described?
- Does the budget propose a reasonable and strategic focus for the Pro Bono Innovation Fund grant dollars?

The Budget allows Applicants to detail the estimated expenses for the full undertaking proposed in the grant. The following guidance provides definitions to help you complete the ***Budget*** for your Pro Bono Innovation Fund Pre-Application.

The Pre-Application *Budget* requests the same level of detail as a budget for a Full Application. This is a change from prior years where LSC did not seek detailed budget information from applicants at the earliest *Letter of Intent to Apply* or *LOI* stage of the special grant funding process. As in prior years, however, Budgets that are submitted as part of your PBIF Pe-Application are considered estimations only. Applicants who are invited to submit a Full Application will have the opportunity to review and change the estimated expenses provided in the Pre-Application Budget.

Below is a summary chart that displays what your Pre-Application budget will look like once it is completed. The columns show LSC Fund Share and Application Share and the rows list the four main budget categories for LSC special grants: *Personnel Expenses; Project Expenses; Contracts & Subgrants; and Indirect Costs*.

Category Name	LSC Fund Share	Applicant Share	Project Total
Personnel Expenses			
Project Expenses			
Contracts & Subgrants			
Indirect Cost			

<u>Definitional Guidance for Budget Lines</u>: Below are charts and guidance to assist with the development of each expense category in your Pre-Application Budget.

1. **Personnel Expenses**

The Budget form in GrantEase will ask you to list each individual staff person with responsibilities on the grant with the following detail for each: full name and title, annual salary, the percentage of time that the person will spend on the grant, and the total dollar amount that will be charged to the Pro Bono Innovation Fund portion of the grant.

Name & Position Title	Full Annual Salary	% Time Dedicated to the Project per year	LSC Fund Share	Justification
First and Last Name	*Dollar amount*	*Percentage*	*Dollar amount*	*Provide a brief statement of the grant-related responsibilities of the listed staff member. Please limit your response to approximately 2 – 4 sentences per individual.*

Note on Salaries and Wages: Applicants must include the salary or wages of personnel who will staff or have responsibilities for the proposed Pro Bono Innovation Fund grant.

- For staff who will be contributing in-kind time on the grant and for whom Pro Bono Innovation Funds are not being requested, please list the individual with the same detail, but enter "0" for *LSC Fund Share*.
- If the Applicant is planning to subgrant or contract for personnel at a third party as part of this grant, the personnel costs related to each subgrant or contract must be listed in the *Subgrant & Contracts* section. This requirement applies to all contracts and subgrants that will be supporting the proposed grant, not only those that are funded directly by the grant.

Cross Reference with Budget Staffing and Leadership Plan: Personnel Expenses should list the same individuals who are included in the *Budget Staffing and Leadership Plan* with more precise percentage allocations to the grant attributable to the grant and in-kind contributions, if applicable.

1a. Fringe Benefits

Fringe Benefit Rate	Justification
Percentage	*Provide list of covered items*

<u>Fringe Benefits</u>: Applicants will provide a fringe benefit rate as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply. Allowable costs typically include FICA, worker's compensation, retirement, state unemployment tax, health and life insurance, IRA, and 401K or 403(b). Holidays, leave, and

other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rate and should be included in the *Salaries* line.

2. **Project Expenses**

Line Item Type	Item Purpose	LSC Fund Share	Applicant Share	Justification
Choose from list of seven categories of project expenses	*Provide a brief list or the calculation/formula for the expense*	*Dollar amount*	*Dollar amount*	*Brief rationale for the item(s)under the grant. Please limit your response to approximately 2 – 4 sentences per individual.*

In the Budget form in GrantEase, there are seven options for Project Expenses: *Travel; Equipment; Software; Supplies; Marketing & Outreach; Training & Conference; Other.* Below is brief definitional guidance for each:

<u>*Travel*</u>*:* Include costs for staff travel that is directly related to the grant. Allowable costs are transportation, lodging, subsistence, and other related expenses. Under *Description*, please provide a calculation that includes itemized costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other travel-related expenses multiplied by the number of trips and grant staff per trip. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information. Reimbursement should not exceed the federal mileage rate unless Applicant policy allows. Only costs for domestic travel are allowable.

Applicants should include travel costs associated with participation in or presentation at in-person meetings or conferences such as the Equal Justice Conference, National Legal Aid and Defender Conference, the Pro Bono Institute's Annual Conference, and state/local bar conferences. Travel costs associated with research visits and/or learning tours should also be included in this line.

Applicants *must* include funds to send key grant staff (for both grantee and subgrantee) to LSC's Innovations in Technology Conference for each grant year. Key staff must also attend the Pro Bono Innovation Fund Grantee meeting, which will take place during LSC's Innovations in Technology Conference in January each year. Applicants are encouraged to budget enough money to attend the PBIF Grantee Meeting and to stay for the Innovations in Technology Conference. Currently, it is anticipated the meetings will be held in-person in 2022 (Phoenix, AZ) and 2023 (TBD), but this may be subject to change.

<u>*Equipment*</u>*:* Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year. In the *Description*, please show the unit cost and number of units you are requesting funding to purchase or lease.

Software: Software may include the purchase of off-the-shelf software that is directly related to the grant, subscriptions, user licenses, or add-on modules for existing software necessary for the proposed Pro Bono Innovation Fund grant. It can also include data charges or plans necessary to maintain communications for the grant. In the *Description*, please show the cost and number of licenses or data plans you are requesting funding for, if applicable.

Supplies: Include the funds necessary for the purchase of consumable supplies and materials. In the *Description*, Applicants should provide a list of the types of supplies that will be necessary for the grant with a calculation for cost determinations.

Marketing & Outreach: Include the costs necessary to market and promote efforts under the grant to clients and volunteers. These costs may include web content development, use of social media, promotional print materials, translation services, advertising, or other types of outreach expenses.

Training & Conferences: Include the costs associated with training staff on grant requirements or to enhance the skills staff need for effective grant implementation. In-person or virtual conference and meeting fees for staff may be included in this section. Expenses associated with travel and lodging to conferences should be included within the Travel Section. Training costs may also include the expenses associated with in-person or virtual trainings for pro bono volunteers, including materials, meeting space fees, and incidentals. Costs associated with food and beverages, gifts, awards, volunteer incentives and/or other marketing items should not be included in the Pro Bono Innovation Fund share. These costs can be included in the applicant share of the budget using non-LSC dollars.

Other: Include and explain any other grant-related costs not otherwise captured in the other categories.

3. **Contracts & Subgrants**

Line Item Type	**Item Purpose**	**LSC Fund Share**	**Applicant Share**	**Justification**
Choose either Contract or Subgrant	*Describe the contract or subgrant. If applicable, identify the vendor or subgrantee*	*Dollar amount*	*Dollar amount*	*Brief rationale for the contract or subgrant under the grant Please limit your response to approximately 2 – 4 sentences per individual.*

Contracts: Include the total costs for third parties to provide services related to the grant's operations that are not subgrants for programmatic activities. This may include contracts to provide software coding for new online templates, provide project management support in technology implementation efforts, conduct technical training, conduct surveys, provide graphic design or user interface services, or conduct web or software development work. In the *Description*, indicate the estimated total costs and hourly rate for contractors. Applicants with expenses listed under *Contracts* should list each entity or type of entity with whom Applicants propose to contract.

Subgrants: Subgrants include costs for third parties to engage in programmatic activities that the grantee would otherwise be expected to carry out in furtherance of the grant goals and activities. This may include subgrants to third parties to conduct intake, place cases, recruit and train volunteers, or develop substantive content in any format and present it to the eligible client population or pro bono volunteers. Applicants should determine that the proposed subgrant meets the characteristics of a subgrant specified in 45 C.F.R. § 1627.3(b).

4. Indirect Costs

Beginning in 2021, LSC will allow grantees to charge both direct and indirect costs to newly awarded LSC special grants. Applicants applying for or receiving special grants beginning in 2021, should follow their normal accounting practices for both indirect costs and direct costs associated with special grants.

In the next few weeks, LSC will be issuing a Program Letter about the new indirect cost policy for LSC special grants and these PBIF Pre-Application budget guidance will be updated as soon as the Program Letter issues.