



Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation, Inc.

## COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

June 29, 2018

### INTRODUCTION

---

The Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation, Inc. (WisTAF) is pleased to announce that it will begin seeking applications for a second round of proposals to be funded by a distribution resulting from a national settlement between Bank of America and the U.S. Department of Justice. Distributions from the settlement provide funds to Interest On Lawyers' Trust Accounts (IOLTA) organizations (or other statewide bar association affiliated intermediaries) to be used "for the sole purpose of providing funds to legal aid organizations in the state of Wisconsin to be used for foreclosure prevention legal assistance and community redevelopment legal assistance."

**Estimated release of application materials: July 14, 2018**

**Deadline to apply: August 31, 2018**

### AWARD INFORMATION

---

WisTAF will make grant awards from the remaining distribution balance of approximately \$5.2 million in annual or multi-year grants (depending on the nature and scope of the projects for which funds are applied) over the next five years. Grants may be renewable pending recommendation by the WisTAF Grants/Evaluation Committee, followed by Board of Directors approval. The exact dollar amount of grants awarded in any given year will vary depending on the number and quality of applications received. WisTAF has full discretion to award or hold funding to distribute later for any reason, including an assessment of the ability of the applicants to meet the articulated requirements below.

### GUIDELINES

---

WisTAF is seeking to fund legal assistance projects which support community redevelopment efforts. The Grants/Evaluation Committee will consider projects that are creative and have the potential for far-reaching and lasting impact on communities – locally or statewide.

Applicants have some flexibility in defining community redevelopment. However, applicants should make a connection between the proposal's objectives and WisTAF's view that:

*Community redevelopment encourages using local resources in a way that enhances economic opportunities while improving social conditions in a sustainable way.*

Proposed projects should support and promote community redevelopment by providing legal services that revitalize or stabilize low income communities or foster economic redevelopment in those communities. Strategies may consist of a broad range of legal services including providing counseling, advice, representation or transactional work to advocacy, community redevelopment, neighborhood and other organizations, or to individuals either directly or through partner organizations, as well as policy and impact work. Proposals should reflect an understanding of the *current* needs and challenges within the communities to be served, and knowledge of successful models for meeting those needs. Applicants should identify established and/or

## GUIDELINES (continued)

---

planned partnerships that are necessary to achieve the stated goals.

*Note:* Proposals for continued foreclosure prevention legal assistance funding will be considered. However, proposals should describe how grant funds will be used to prevent foreclosure in the context of the specific circumstances faced *currently* by the communities to be served. Recognizing that the foreclosure crisis has slowed, applicants should discuss the foreclosure trends and continuing borrower needs that their programs specifically seek to address, and how their foreclosure prevention services will meet those needs. Strategies may consist of a broad range of legal work including advice and counsel, representation, mediation, or policy and impact work, but should reflect an understanding of the *current* needs and challenges within the communities to be served; knowledge of successful models; flexibility and creativity; and necessary collaborations to achieve stated goals.

## FUNDING CRITERIA

---

WisTAF will give special consideration to proposals that:

- Offer creative and innovative approaches for supporting and encouraging community redevelopment through legal services and/or advocacy. Elements of such proposals may include (but are not limited to):
  - Developing and increasing the capacity of nonprofit organizations that serve low-income communities;
  - Supporting the development and preservation of affordable housing, childcare, senior centers, job training programs, etc.;
  - Supporting microbusinesses, low-income entrepreneurs, and other local and community-owned services;
  - Legal representation of low-income communities with respect to community conditions such as environmental issues, transit development, homelessness, affordable housing, eviction proceedings, and other matters that help in the healthy development of communities;
  - Other legal assistance that is transformative for the community in that it promotes systemic change, or promotes economic security, and has a broad impact.
- Identify opportunities for collaboration with strategic partners (neighborhood community organizations, community development corporations, law schools, other nonprofits) to provide legal services that revitalize or stabilize low-income communities;

Other criteria to be used in evaluating proposals include:

- WisTAF will consider the articulated needs of defined target populations.
- Impact of services: WisTAF will consider the anticipated outcomes of the services, including the number of people that will be served through services to organizations or directly; the nature of the impact on the lives of target population/s served; and the economic impact on the targeted geographic area/s served.
- Sustainability and leverage: How will the organization demonstrate realistic sustainability, or mission accomplishment of the project/program within the funding period? Is it replicable or scalable? How will funds be leveraged to increase services?

## **FUNDING CRITERIA (continued)**

---

- Organizational excellence: WisTAF also will consider the experience of the grantee in successfully executing similar projects; the stability of the organization infrastructure as will impact its ability, as necessary, to hire, retrain, supervise attorneys, and to successfully administer the grant, including grant budgeting, reporting and evaluation.

All funding decisions will be guided by WisTAF's mission:

*The Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation Inc. (WisTAF) is dedicated to equal access to the civil justice system, funding legal services for low-income persons through the fair and effective administration of Interest On Lawyers' Trust Accounts (IOLTA), Public Interest Legal Services Fund (PILSF), and other sources.*

## **APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY**

---

WisTAF is conducting an open application process. Current or past WisTAF funding is not a prerequisite for receiving a grant award.

Settlement distribution terms and conditions require that WisTAF provide funds to “legal aid organizations in the state of Wisconsin.” However, we permit and encourage collaboration with strategic partners (neighborhood community organizations, community development corporations, law schools, local governments and other nonprofits) to provide legal services that revitalize or stabilize low-income communities.

We will consider proposals related to providing services on either a statewide basis or local level.

## **EVALUATION**

---

Grant recipients must have the ability and will be required to collect and submit data on services provided, usage of grant funds, outcomes achieved, client demographics, and other information relevant to the programs funded under this grant, as requested.