Law and Justice Foundation of NSW Grant Applicants Kit

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Applications and enquiries should be directed to:

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LAW AND JUSTICE FOUNDATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Contents

About our Grants Program

Objects of the Foundation

The Law and Justice Foundation of NSW is an independent, statutory, not-for-profit organisation established in 1967. The Foundation is incorporated in New South Wales by the *Law and Justice Foundation of NSW Act 2000 (NSW)*, which states the objects of the organisation as follows:

> *5 Objects of Foundation*
> *(1) The objects of the Foundation are to contribute to the development of a fair and equitable justice system which addresses the legal needs of the community and to improve access to justice by the community (in particular, by economically and socially disadvantaged people).*

Purpose of the Foundation's Grants Program

Given the objects of the Foundation, the aim of the Foundation's Grants program is to improve access to justice, particularly for socially and economically disadvantaged people, by supporting selected projects to improve access and decrease barriers to justice, or through research, to identify need or ways to improve access to justice.

Key principles

The following summarise key principles that underpin the grants program and guide the Foundation in its grant-making process.

1. The Foundation will only make grants to projects that fit squarely within its statutory objects to contribute to the development of a fair and equitable justice system, and to improve access to justice, especially for socially and economically disadvantaged people.
2. The Foundation aims to be very 'outcomes' focused in relation to its grants program, and will only make grants where there is likely to be a real 'outcome' that will contribute to the achievement of the Foundation's objects. Applicants are therefore required to identify the particular need they are addressing, how the project seeks to address this need, and how they will know they have made a difference at the end of the project.
3. In assessing applications the Foundation will, where appropriate, take an evidence-based approach. Applications that refer to up-to-date evidence and research to support their methods/proposals assist the Foundation's considerations.
4. The Foundation is not a recurrent funder. The Foundation's grants program cannot be relied upon for support of ongoing activities, or of 'core business' of an organisation.
5. The types of projects the Foundation's grants program may support include:
    a. 'one-off' projects likely to make a difference
    b. 'seed' projects that have a genuine chance of being supported beyond the initial grant period if they prove effective
    c. ‘trial’ projects that are a trial of a genuinely new strategy or intervention, or a program that is new to a particular group or location, which is focused on sound research and

evaluation, so that the key outcome is not principally the ongoing implementation of the strategy or intervention, but learning lessons about that strategy or intervention

d. 'pilot' projects are similar to trials except that there is a higher degree of confidence in the project's success. Importantly, the applicant is able to demonstrate likely funding for the continuation and/or expansion of the service or intervention beyond the grant period. Pilots also require sound evaluation

6. The Foundation's grants program also seeks to be an avenue for innovative and original solutions and projects to be identified and supported. Therefore the program will also consider supporting projects where there is genuinely little evidence-based knowledge about the efficacy of the method, provided that the methods proposed are reasonably assessed to have the potential for effect, and that at the end of the project more will be known about the value of the proposed method/solution in meeting the identified need.
7. Assessing the effectiveness of any Foundation supported project, through an appropriate and cost effective evaluation, is a requirement for all grant-funded projects.
8. In fairness to all applicants the program needs to ensure that all successful applicants meet the grant conditions and complete projects in a timely fashion. While the capacity of applicant organisations will be taken into account grant support may be withdrawn where recipients do not act within reasonable timeframes.

What is the current focus of the Foundation's grants program?

The current focus of the grants program is on projects from which lessons will be learned that contribute to identifying effective reforms, initiatives and programs to address legal need.

Who can apply?

The Foundation accepts applications from organisations with an ABN but not from individuals.

Preference will be given to applications initiated at the community level or with substantial community input.

We welcome joint applications from more than one organisation, although the application needs to be under the auspices of a single incorporated organisation, which will take responsibility for managing the project and administering the funds.

What we don't fund — list of exclusions

Core funding
The Foundation is not a recurrent funder. Our grants program cannot be used to support the ongoing activities or infrastructure of an organisation, or to purchase office equipment.

Academic research
Any organisation which has access to other available funding sources (such as Australian Research Council or internal university research funding) must demonstrate in the grant application that they have exhausted all of these sources and provide the reasons for the failure to attract these other funds.

The Foundation is more likely to support research that addresses known problems and yields answers that are able to be immediately and practically implemented at the conclusion of the research. Research proposed that is largely exploratory, or that will lead to a recommendation for further research before any direct action can be taken, is unlikely to be supported with a grant from the Foundation.

The Foundation will not fund individual research or study to obtain a tertiary qualification.

Private businesses
The Foundation is unlikely to fund projects from a private business or consultancy. However, applicants may subcontract private consultants to do part of their project provided this is identified in the funding submission and approved.

Interstate and international applicants
The Foundation receives its income from the NSW Public Purpose Fund and is obliged to ensure its grants benefit the people of NSW. We will not fund projects that primarily benefit residents of other states or countries. The Foundation may fund part of a national project if the project benefits the people of NSW.

Travel costs
The Foundation will not fund individual travel grants.

Conferences
The Foundation does not sponsor conferences or conference attendance except in exceptional circumstances.

Retrospective grants
The Foundation will not cover expenditure incurred before the grant has been approved. Similarly, we will not fund projects which have deadlines which fall before the normal timelines for grant approval.

Litigation
The Foundation will not fund litigants.

Lobbying
The Foundation will not normally fund lobbying activities

What is the difference between a small and general grant?

Small Grants
These are grants of $5,000 or less (excluding GST) and are approved by the Director of the Foundation rather than the Board.

Small grants can be applied for at any time and the turnaround from application to decision is generally about four to eight weeks.

You will be notified in writing by the Director about whether your application was successful or not.

General Grants
These are grants of more than $5,000 and are capped at $50,000 (excluding GST). You should include all necessary expenses in your budget to enable the project to be completed successfully.

The Foundation will consider whether the funds requested are adequate to successfully implement the project and achieve its aim. Therefore it is important that the application include all of the necessary expenses, and show all other funding sources, including the contribution of the applicant organisation.

All general grant applications are considered by the Foundation's Board of Governors. The Foundation may request additional information from you after you have submitted your application. Generally, all applications are subject to a confidential external review process and the comments of external reviewers are used by the Board to assist it in its consideration. At the Director's discretion, some applications may not be sent for external review but rather, if appropriate, be forwarded directly to the Board for consideration for approval.

Closing dates

General grants can usually be applied for twice a year. The first round usually closes on **31 March** and the second round usually closes on **31 August**. These dates can vary from year to year so you are strongly advised to check our website or call the Foundation to check closing dates before going ahead with an application.

Turnaround time for applications

The turnaround from close of applications to decisions for **General** applications is generally about 12 to 20 weeks.

The turnaround from close of applications to decisions for **Small** applications is generally about 4 to 8 weeks.

How to apply

3 important steps

Step 1: Read this Kit

Make sure that your proposal fits with our focus and our criteria. Bear in mind that we are a research Foundation, so we are keen to fund **evidence based projects** that will produce **findings about what works in legal service delivery for socially and economically disadvantaged people in NSW.**

Step 2: Consult with the Foundation

You must discuss your project proposal with the Foundation's Grants and Legal Information Manager **at least 6 weeks before the closing date**. You should contact the Grants and Legal Information Manager to make a time to discuss your proposal, either by phone or in person. To assist you to prepare for this meeting, please read the information in the section **'discussing your grant proposal'** (see below) and be ready to discuss the questions it contains.

Step 3: Complete an application

Once you have discussed your proposal with the Grants Manager, if we think that it sounds like a good fit with our grants program, you will be provided with the link to our SmartyGrants applicant website. You can then login and access our application form. Submit your application form, with any relevant attachments, by the round closing date and time. Late applications are not accepted.

Discussing your grant proposal

Why must I contact the Foundation at least six weeks ahead of the grant closing date to discuss my proposal for a grant?

We encourage all applicants (for general and small grants) to contact the Foundation as early as possible so that we can provide advice to help you with your application. Although making contact early is no guarantee of success, by taking the time to discuss your application with the Foundation, you can take advantage of the help that is available.

Foundation staff can confirm whether your project idea meets our grants criteria and give you feedback on your aim, strategy and how you might evaluate the project. It's a good idea to set aside time for this discussion, and be ready to go through the main elements of the application.

For plain language projects we are able to provide useful information about suppliers and publishing, as well as give you tips to make your application stand out from the crowd. We can also advise on user testing of resources and seminars. And sometimes the resource you have in mind already exists, so we can save you the time, trouble and expense of re-creating it.

A useful way to prepare to discuss your project is to give some thought to the Foundation's 'Grants criteria' (following) and be prepared to answer the following:

- How do you know there is an identified need?
- What difference do you want to make for your target group?
- What is your proposed strategy for making that difference to your target group?
- Does your organisation have expertise in this area?
- Have you consulted other organisations in the field? Who else thinks it's a good idea?
- Have you checked whether your project duplicates something that is already happening? Is it new? How is it different? Or will it complement and build on existing initiatives?
- Is the project cost effective? Does your project provide "bang for buck"?
- Does the project have a wider applicability beyond your local area?
- Can you plan a realistic and appropriate budget?
- How are you going to promote your service or resource? How will you disseminate your resource or information?
- How will you know whether you have made the intended difference to your target group?

We are happy to review draft applications and provide feedback, as long as you have discussed your application with us first and draft applications are received **at least two weeks** before the round closing date.

In some cases your idea for a project won't meet the Foundation's guidelines – by calling and checking first, you can save yourself the time and effort that you would have put into writing the application, and the disappointment of having it declined.

You don't have to wait until six weeks before the round closes – the earlier you start discussing your application with the Foundation the more time you have to work on it.

To make an appointment to discuss your proposal, contact the Foundation's Grants and Legal Information Manager either by phone on 02 8227 3210 or by email at grants@lawfoundation.net.au

Grants criteria

Grants must contribute to the Foundation's objects (see page 1) and are assessed against the following criteria:

- Is there an identified need for the project?
- Is there a clearly identified target group?
- Is there a clearly identified aim for the project?
- Is the proposed strategy most appropriate to meet the identified need?
- Does your organisation have expertise in this area?
- Have you consulted other organisations in the field?
- Does the project duplicate or complement existing initiatives?
- Is the project cost effective?
- Does the project have a wider applicability beyond your local area?
- Is the budget realistic and appropriate?
- Are the promotion and dissemination strategies appropriate?
- Is the evaluation strategy appropriate?

Successful applications

1. You will be sent two copies of a grant agreement to sign, which may contain some specific conditions.
2. You will sign and return one copy of the grant agreement. The agreement must be signed by the most senior person in your organisation, who takes ultimate responsibility for the delivery of the project and correct acquittal of the grant funds. This would usually be either the Chair or the CEO of your organisation.
3. You will then submit a project outline including a plan that sets out the key stages in the delivery of the project, reporting milestones, a payment schedule and an evaluation plan, which must then be approved by the Grants and Legal Information Manager. **Note**: The grant funding is conditional upon the receipt of the signed grant agreement and approval of the project outline. You should not start the project until the grant agreement has been co-signed and your project outline approved by the Foundation.

   You should also be aware that the Foundation only makes grant payments linked to project costs, generally on receipt of milestone reports. For salary costs there can be an initial payment to allow you to employ a project worker, but ongoing salary payments need to be linked to project deliverables as evidenced by milestone reports and/or drafts of project products.
4. You will implement the project and provide reports according to the approved project outline. Invoices for the grant funds should be submitted during the project according to the project outline.
5. If there are changes to the project from what is in the project outline at any time during the project, you must discuss these changes with the Grants and Legal Information Manager. You will need to get approval for a variation to the project, especially if there is likely to be a significant delay. The Foundation will not unreasonably withhold approval.
6. You will evaluate the project in accordance with your evaluation plan. This will normally occur throughout the duration of the project.
7. You will write a Final Project Report that will include a description of what happened, an evaluation of what happened, lessons learnt and an account of final expenditure. (See information about the Final Report below).

Preparing your application

Project planning and terminology

When preparing your application for a grant from the Foundation you will need to address the following key questions concerning your project plan:

- **Need:** What is the need or gap that you are trying to address?
- **Target group:** Who will the project benefit?
- **Aim:** What do you want to achieve?
- **Strategy:** What action will you take to achieve your aim?
- **Action Plans:** How will you do it?
- **Evaluation:** How will you know when you have achieved your aim?

Need

A need is a gap in services or knowledge that when filled will assist the target group to better access justice. Part of the process of assessing whether there is a need is to check what already exists.

Examples of legal needs include:

- The need to redress the lack of knowledge of child protection workers in rural areas about legal responsibilities in relation to children at risk of abuse or neglect.
- The need to overcome the lack of knowledge of Aboriginal tenants in NSW of their legal rights and obligations relating to renting residential properties.
- The need to improve the awareness of parents of children with disabilities about the rights of their children in relation to discrimination, access to disability services and guardianship.

Target Group

The target group is the people for whom the project has been developed. The above examples illustrate three different target groups (i.e. child protection workers, Aboriginal tenants in NSW and parents of children with disabilities).

Aim

The aim is a statement of what you intend to achieve in relation to meeting the needs of the target group. Some examples are:

- to improve the knowledge of child protection workers in rural NSW about their legal responsibilities in relation to children at risk of abuse or neglect.
- to improve the knowledge of Aboriginal tenants in NSW about their legal rights and obligations when renting.
- to increase the awareness of parents of children with disabilities of the rights of children with a disability in relation to discrimination, access to education, access to disability services and guardianship.

Strategy

Strategy is the action you take to achieve your aim and is sometimes known as the method. It may be necessary to use more than one strategy to achieve your aim. For example:

Aim	Strategy
To improve the knowledge of child protection workers in rural NSW about their legal responsibilities in relation to children at risk of abuse or neglect	Develop and provide a DVD training resource to child protection workers in rural NSW
For Aboriginal tenants in NSW to have improved knowledge about legal rights and obligations when renting	a) produce a wallet card to distribute to the target Aboriginal community with key information about NSW tenancy laws; and b) to run community legal education sessions for community leaders on tenants' rights and responsibilities
For parents with children with disabilities to become aware of the rights of their children about discrimination, access to education, access to disability services and guardianship	Provide information sessions for these parents about these issues

Action Plan

An action plan separates out the stages of the project and identifies what needs to happen in each stage. It shows *who* will do *what* and *when* to implement the strategies.

For example, the stages to produce a booklet may include the following:

Stage	Activity	Start	Finish	Person Responsible
Stage 1	Plan the process			
Stage 2	Employ author/editor and establish a steering committee			
Stage 3	Draft text			
Stage 4	User test			
Stage 5	Final draft to Foundation for checking against Publishing Checklist			
Stage 6	Publish			
Stage 7	Promote and distribute			

For more information on the stages involved in producing a publication, see our factsheet 'Project managing your publication', available for download from our website.

The following example uses the above project planning terminology:

<table>
<tr><th>Project title</th><th>Child protection resource</th></tr>
<tr><td>Description</td><td>The project will develop and distribute a self-paced learning DVD that assists community services staff in rural NSW to learn about their mandatory child protection reporting responsibilities.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Need</td><td>Community workers in NSW have mandatory reporting responsibilities but many do not have adequate knowledge of what these responsibilities are. Although there are many child protection reporting courses available, these are mainly run in Sydney, and many rural workers do not have access to them.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Target group</td><td>Community workers in rural NSW who work with children.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Aim</td><td>To improve the knowledge of community workers in rural NSW about their legal responsibilities in relation to children at risk of abuse or neglect.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strategy</td><td>Develop, produce, market and distribute a CD ROM and workbook learning package.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Action plan</td><td>
<table>
<tr><th>Stage</th><th>Activity</th><th>Start date</th><th>End date</th><th>Person responsible</th></tr>
<tr><td>Stage 1</td><td>Plan the process</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage 2</td><td>Employ author/editor and establish a steering committee</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage 3</td><td>Draft content</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage 4</td><td>User test the content</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Stage 5</td><td>Finalise the CD-ROM and workbook</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
</table>

Steering committees

What is a Steering Committee?
As the name suggests, a Steering Committee helps to steer a project through from start to completion. Sometimes it might be formed entirely by staff from the organisation developing and implementing the project, but more usually it is made up of representatives of key organisations who are partners in the project, and/or who have particular expertise to lend to the project, and/or whose clients are the intended users of the output of the project. It is very important (and useful) to include at least one client of the service, or potential user of the project that is being developed, as their views can be helpful in ensuring that the project is correctly targeted.

A Steering Committee should be helpful to the Project Manager, not a distraction, so membership should be considered carefully.

What is the role of a Steering Committee?
The Steering Committee's role is to provide advice, ensure delivery of the project outputs and the achievement of project outcomes. This may include such tasks as:

- Providing input to the development of the project, including the evaluation strategy;
- Providing advice on the budget;
- Defining and helping to achieve the project outcomes;
- Identifying the priorities in the project – where the most energy should be directed;
- Identifying potential risks;
- Monitoring risks;
- Monitoring timelines;
- Monitoring the quality of the project as it develops;
- Providing advice (and sometimes making decisions) about changes to the project as it develops.

The Steering Committee provides support, guidance and oversight of progress. Members do not usually work on the project themselves. Generally, the Project Manager, and other members of the Project Team, actually do the work implementing the project.

The Project Manager will normally attend meetings of the Steering Committee to report on progress and answer any questions raised by members. It's useful to have an additional person (such someone else working on the project or an administrative staff member) attend to assist the Project Manager by recording the minutes and decisions of the meeting.

What role do individual members perform?
Individual Steering Committee members are not directly responsible for managing project activities, but provide support and guidance for those who do. So, individually, Steering Committee members should:

- Understand the aim, strategy and intended outcomes of the project;
- Appreciate the significance of the project for their own organisation and clients;
- Be genuinely interested in the project and the outcomes that are intended;
- Be an advocate for the project by doing what they can to promote its outputs;
- Have a broad understanding of project management issues.

In practice, this means they:
- Ensure the strategy that is planned matches the aim of the project;
- Consider how they will know if the aim of the project has been achieved;
- Review the progress of the project against the milestones set;
- Consider ideas and issues raised;
- Provide guidance to the project team;
- Help balance conflicting priorities and resources;
- Foster positive communication outside of the Committee regarding the project's progress and outcomes;
- Actively promote the outputs of the project;
- Contribute to the evaluation of the project, both the process of developing and implementing the project, and its actual impact on its intended audience.

One member of the Steering Committee – not a representative of the organisation who "owns" the project – should be elected Chair, to ensure that meetings run smoothly and achieve their objectives.

As members are selected based on their individual knowledge and skills that they bring to the Committee, there can be some confusion and conflict in the accountability of members. The first responsibility of members is the achievement of the project's success, and secondly to their organisation. This should be made very clear at the outset. Similarly, members who have expertise in a particular area should avoid taking a narrow view of their responsibility on the Committee – they are on the Committee to contribute to the entire project.

Sometimes it's useful to prepare a simple role description for members of the Steering Committee which sets out the expectations of them and the commitment that will be required both in time and in practical assistance that their organisation can offer to the project, such as distributing the resource produced, or promoting the outcome of the project to clients.

How often should a steering committee meet?
This is determined by the size and scale of the project. For smaller projects it's usually sufficient to meet once at the planning stage, then again mid-way through the project to monitor progress, and then once more at the end to assess the outcomes of the project and contribute to the evaluation.

For larger projects, the Committee should plan their meetings to coincide with milestones achieved in the project.

It's a good idea to set dates for the meetings in advance and seek commitment from the members of the Committee to attend every meeting. Again, depending on the size of the project, you might want to invite each participating organisation to nominate a Steering Committee member and an alternate who can attend in place of the first nominee if required.

What happens before each meeting?
At least a week before the meeting the Project Manager should circulate papers for the meeting to all Committee members. These should include:
- An agenda, indicating the time planned for the meeting, so that members can allow sufficient time to attend and participate;
- Minutes of the last meeting, including an action list, ideally updated with any information to hand about actions completed or in progress;

- A progress report on the status of the project since the last meeting;
- Any other documents to be considered at the meeting, if any, particularly drafts of resources that are being developed in the project, if relevant.

What happens at the Steering Committee meetings?
The Project Manager usually chairs the meetings. The Chair will conduct the meeting according to the agenda, ensuring that all members are encouraged to provide input throughout the meeting and that any decisions or recommendations are adequately resolved and agreed to by the members.

It's important to check through the list of action items from the previous meeting, confirming action taken and issues resolved, and agreeing how to progress any actions that aren't completed.

What happens after each meeting?
As soon as possible following the meeting, and no later than within a week, a copy of the minutes of the meeting should be circulated to all members. At a minimum, the decisions and action points should be circulated as soon as possible after the meeting. This is important both for ensuring that the minutes accurately reflect the decisions and discussions of the meeting, and to get members moving on the actions they have agreed to implement. Members are more readily able to recall what was discussed at the time and ensure that any important issues or comments raised during the meeting have not been inadvertently overlooked.

The minutes should include a list of the actions agreed at the meeting, clearly labelled with the name of the individual responsible for each action and the expected timeline for implementation. Copies of any additional documentation circulated at the meeting should also be included. Details of the next meeting should be noted clearly.

A Steering Committee won't actually run the project for you, but if the members are selected and briefed appropriately and well, and involved to their potential throughout the life of the project, it can have a very positive impact on the achievement of your project aim.

Risk managing your project to ensure it is successful

There will always be unexpected events that occur in the lifetime of a project that can interrupt progress. However, by anticipating and planning for things that can go wrong, you can put processes in place that minimise disruption and help you to achieve a successful outcome for your clients and for your organisation, and that make the best possible use of the grant funds awarded.

Thinking through the factors that risk the success of your project when you are in the planning stages helps you to minimise or even avoid circumstances that can derail your work.

☐	**Does this project align with your organisation's mission?** Is your project within your organisation's priorities, capabilities and planning? Ensuring your project is part of your organisation's business planning is key to keeping your organisation focused on the aim of the project from beginning to end.
☐	**Does the project have the support of your organisation's board and leadership team?** If it hasn't, you risk not receiving the support and resources that the project requires, particularly if there is a change of leadership in your organisation.
☐	**Does your intended audience actually need or want the resource/service you are offering? How do**

	you know? What evidence do you have? You want to be sure that your resource/service will actually be taken up by your intended audience. Simple surveys and user testing can assist in assessing the level of demand and commitment.
☐	**Do you have a strategy for recruiting participants if you are doing a research project?** • Will you be able to recruit enough people? Do you have a back-up plan for recruitment? Can you still undertake the research if you don't meet the required numbers? ▪ If you aren't an experienced researcher, we recommend that you seek advice on how to recruit participants in such a way that your results aren't biased.
☐	**Is your timeline realistic?** It may be necessary at times to extend the length of a project beyond the original timeline, however it is not desirable to have a project that 'drags on', particularly in a small organisation where resources are stretched. In our experience, the following factors have resulted in projects being extended significantly beyond the original timeline: • staff turnover or unplanned/planned staff absences • inability to attract research participants • inability to attract project partners • delays in achieving necessary approvals for various project stages To ensure your project stays on track: • Do a realistic approximation of how long each step in the project will take in order to work out how much time it should take • Add in additional time to allow for unforseen factors • If part of your project depends on approval from any government agencies, factor in sufficient time to accommodate their processes – these can often take longer than they would in private/not for profit organisations • Factor in annual leave or other forms of leave (planned or unplanned) for staff involved in the project. ▪ Keep all of the paperwork associated with the project up to date and well filed (both digitally and in hard copy) so that in the case of staff turnover or absence, a new project manager can easily take over and ensure that your organisation continues to meet its obligations under the grant agreement.
☐	**Staff recruitment** If your strategy includes staff recruitment, ensure that you have allowed sufficient time for the recruitment process and readvertising if you are unable to recruit a suitable project manager/worker straight away. You should also have a succession plan in case your project worker leaves your organisation before the project is complete.
☐	**Volunteers** If your project relies on volunteers, you should consider: • What processes do you have in place for recruiting good quality volunteers who can do the work required? • What will happen to the project if you are unable to recruit suitable volunteers in the required timeframe? • Will your volunteers have to undergo any checks? Have you allowed time and budget for this? • Will your volunteers require training? Is this easily available within your timeframe? Will this be an additional cost? • If your volunteers leave before the project is complete, can you quickly recruit replacements who are able to perform to the standard you require?
☐	**Are there partner organisations that could or should be involved?** Partnering with organisations that already deliver services to your intended audience, or in the geographic area where you intend to deliver your service, can be very helpful in promoting your project, encouraging participation, and sharing useful information about what works and what doesn't work with your intended audience. They may also be a useful ally in sustaining the effects of your work.

While working with other organisations is important, confusion about roles and responsibilities can sometimes arise. At the start of the project, make sure that all participants are very clear on their role and what is expected of them – it is a good idea to document this. This documentation should also establish who in each participating organisation will take responsibility for "signing off" on the outcome of the project.

☐ **Have you thought of all of the external resources that your project requires?**

In addition to the grant funding you may need resources such as:

- Access to pro bono advice
- Access to particular locations
- Opportunities to present sessions in local schools
- People with expertise in proofreading, editing and design
- Guest speakers
- Venue to launch the product
- Funds to promote the launch of the product

It's best to pre-book external resources so that they are available at the time you need them. These commitments will also assist you to keep the project on track.

☐ **Have you costed the project realistically?**

It is important to create a realistic budget based on actual quotes from service providers. You also need to consider:

- What will happen if the costs change?
- Do you have sufficient funds to cover unbudgeted costs?
- Do you have any additional funds to allocate to the project should unanticipated outcomes occur during the project?
- Will the service providers honour their original quotes? Sometimes your suppliers can put up their charges in the time that elapses since you first sought a quote, so components of the project end up costing more than you asked for in the grant budget.

☐ **Do you have access to the skills required to carry out a useful evaluation of your project?**

Have you considered the best way to conduct your evaluation, in order to maximise the response rate? Evaluation of the project is important for two reasons:

- It tells you whether or not you have achieved your aim, and what impact the project has made.
- It provides useful information about both what works and what doesn't work. In many cases, this information is helpful for other groups who might want to conduct a similar project in future.
- Information about how to conduct a simple evaluation of your project can be found in the grants section on the LJF website.
- In addition, the Foundation may be able to provide advice about designing your evaluation strategy when you are first planning your project.
- Allow enough time for the evaluation to be done properly, and make sure you budget for it when you are costing the project.
- The Foundation requires you to include information gained from your evaluation in your final grant report. We consider evaluation to be a key part of your project, so make sure that it is planned and conducted well.

Evaluation

Evaluation – two broad purposes

In the context of our grants program, we use the term 'evaluation' to describe two broad evaluation purposes.

The first is the evaluation that goes on (or should go on) at key steps as your project unfolds, to make sure that the final product is as good as it could be.

So, for example, if you are developing a plain language information brochure about the law, all those things that go into developing the brochure, such as user testing draft(s) of the publication, getting legal and plain language experts to check and improve the content, are part of this meaning of evaluation. Similarly, if you are working on a research report, you would send drafts to colleagues with expertise to critically comment on drafts, prior to completion of the published version

This type of evaluation is all about the formation of the product, and most of us probably do it without even recognising that we are. Nevertheless it is a very important form of evaluation, and in the interests of supporting projects of high quality, the Foundation pays close attention to the this type of evaluation in the application.

The second context where we use the term evaluation is to assess whether at the end, the project has achieved what it set out to achieve (i.e. the outcome). This is what most of us probably think of when we hear the term 'evaluation'.

Evaluation of the outcome aims to measure the project's actual outcome against the original intended outcome. For example, if you ran a seminar to increase the knowledge of a target audience about a certain issue, you might survey participants before the seminar, and then again sometime after, to assess whether there was an increase in their knowledge.

Two ways to evaluate the outcome

Sometimes, it may be too difficult or too expensive to truly measure the actual impact of a project. For example, your project may have developed a radio program on legal issues that is played on community radio stations across the state, with the aim of improving community awareness of those issues. While there are some measures of 'outcome' (such as measuring before and after legal inquiries to certain services, etc.), to really evaluate the project's impact you would probably need to conduct some form of expensive state-wide population survey (which is almost certainly far more expensive that the project itself.)

In such cases you may need to look for 'proxies' to be measured instead of real indicators of impact. Quite often the most useful proxies relate to the process you used to do the project. So in this case I might evaluate the process I used to develop my radio program, and then how I ensured it reached a wide audience by asking:

- Did I consult the target group before developing the text, did I user test drafts of the program with the target audience?
- Have I had legal experts approve the content, etc?
- What indicators do I have that I might have reached the target audience?
- What stations played the program, in what timeslots?

What were the listener audience numbers at those times?

It is not surprising that it is sometimes said that evaluation of the outcomes answers two types of questions:

- What outcome was achieved by the project? (evaluation of the outcome), or

- How was that outcome achieved? (evaluation of the process of achieving the outcome)

Why evaluate?

As we have just seen, evaluation does at least two important things. It can help you ensure that the product of the project is as good as it can be, and it helps you know if your project has achieved its aim, which will in turn help you to answer a range of other questions - such as is this the most appropriate strategy to meet this need, do I need to implement this project to a wider audience?

Of course, in answering these two questions, many others might be answered as well, such as how the product or project can be improved.

Evaluating your project

Most Foundation-funded projects will require an appropriate evaluation strategy, usually with components that contribute to the formation of the product (to make the product the best possible on current knowledge/practice), and that assess the outcomes (either by evaluating the outcome or, by proxy, evaluating the process to achieve the outcome). What is ‘appropriate’ will depend on the type and nature of the project.

For example, a project that hopes to convince a key stakeholder, such as the government or a funding body, that the project method is an effective way of achieving its aim (and should be funded to continue) will need to have a rigorous and persuasive evaluation of the outcomes of the project.

Similarly a trial, in which some new idea or method is being tested, will likely place emphasis on evaluation of the outcome.

On the other hand, a pilot project that is transposing a successful method from elsewhere, and has reasonable expectation of being the start of an ongoing (supported) program, might need to focus more on lessons gained from implementation and less so on outcomes evaluation.

Importantly, while the purpose of the evaluation might be different, many of the evaluation tools can be employed in all contexts and stages of evaluation. User testing, expert reviews, surveys and analysis of administrative data can all be used in progressive evaluation as the project is implemented, and in the evaluation of the outcome, (either by evaluating the outcome or, by proxy, evaluating the process to achieve the outcome) depending on the project and the evaluation questions to be answered.

Below are examples of questions to ask and information that can be gathered to evaluate plain language law, community legal education and awareness raising projects.

For each example, there is a broad evaluation question that represents the main question you would like answered. Recognising that sometimes it is not feasible to directly answer this main question, we suggest some more specific questions which can be more easily answered, but still provide useful information.

Example 1: Evaluating plain language law projects

In undertaking plain language law projects the aim may be to improve the knowledge of your target audience about relevant legal issues. Your general evaluation question may be “did you increase the knowledge of the relevant community?”

It may be possible to answer this question through an evaluation of the outcome, if the target audience is well defined and accessible (eg prisoners, people in nursing homes etc). This may be possible by gathering information through a survey or interviews to assess the target group’s levels of knowledge on the topic prior to their accessing the resource. At an appropriate time after the resource has been distributed to the target group, you may wish to re-test their levels of knowledge on the topic.

However, if your target audience is, for example 'all tenants in NSW', then a comprehensive evaluation of whether you did reach all tenants in NSW may be beyond the scope of the project. In this case, your outcome evaluation could focus on the overall process you used to do the project. An alternative may be to focus on the overall process of producing the product (so was it done in the best way possible within available resources), and whether it was done well (eg was it user tested, checked by an expert in the field, etc). This is how the formation evaluation stage can contribute to the outcome evaluation.

You may ask other questions more directly related to the development and distribution of the product which might tell you about the conditions in which knowledge is most likely to have been increased such as the following:

Is the content accurate?	Use legal specialists to review the content
Was the content useful?	▪ Carry out user testing during the development of the resource. ▪ Once the publication is complete or before a new version is produced, have a focus group of users to discuss whether the publication was useful and usable.
Who uses or used the resource?	▪ Keep records of who requested copies of the resource. However please note that distribution lists can be a misleading indicator of use as resources can be sent to organisations and never used. Actual requests are a more accurate indicator of demand and possible use. ▪ Carry out a survey of users three months after the production of the resource.
Was the resource produced according to recommended guidelines?	Check your resource against the Publishing Checklist guidelines

Example 2: Evaluating community legal education projects

In undertaking community legal education workshops the aim may be to increase the knowledge of the target group.

Depending on the budget and timeframes of the project, the question "did the workshop increase the knowledge of the target group?" may be able to be answered through conducting an evaluation of the outcome. When gathering information to answer this question, one method may be to assess the target group's level of knowledge on the topic prior to undertaking the workshop.

This could be done by asking participants to complete a short survey at the beginning of the workshop or telephone interviews with the target group prior to the workshop. At an appropriate time after the target group has participated in the workshop, re-test their levels of knowledge on the topic through a phone or mail out survey or through telephone or face to face interviews.

However, if this question is too difficult to answer within the timeframe and budget, an evaluation of the content and process of developing and conducting the workshop and whether it was done well may be a feasible alternative.

You may ask other questions more directly related to the development and delivery of the workshops which might tell you about the conditions in which knowledge is most likely to have been increased such as the following:

Is the content accurate?	Use legal specialists to prepare the content.
Was the workshop attended by the target group?	▪ Was the workshop promoted through the appropriate channels used by the target group? ▪ Was the workshop held in a venue accessible to the target group? ▪ How many people came and where were they from?
Was the content useful to the people attending?	▪ Was the content user tested with representatives of the target group during development? ▪ Observe participants during the workshop, e.g. were they engaged, did they ask relevant questions etc? ▪ Use a questionnaire to test participant knowledge before and after the seminar to see if their legal knowledge has increased.
Did the target group use the information afterwards?	For example, telephone a sample of workshop participants six weeks after the workshop and ask them if they can identify any changes to their practice arising from the workshop.

Example 3: Evaluating awareness-raising projects

The following is an example of questions to ask and information that can be gathered to evaluate awareness-raising projects.

In undertaking an awareness-raising project, the aim may be to change the behaviour of a certain target group.

Depending on the budget and timeframes of the project this question "did people change their behaviour after the campaign?" may be able to be answered by conducting an evaluation of the outcomes if the target group is specific and accessible.

This may be possible by contacting a sample of the target group prior to the campaign and asking them what they are currently doing in relation to the issue, through a survey or interviews. Perhaps then follow up with a post campaign survey or interview to find out if the sample of the target group has changed their behaviour in relation to the issue.

However, this question may be hard to answer within the timeframe and budget of the project. If that is the case, an evaluation of the content and style of the campaign (i.e. user testing of key messages and design) as well as an evaluation of the overall process of developing and running the campaign and whether it was done well, may be a feasible alternative.

You may ask other questions more directly related to the development and delivery of the awareness raising campaign which might tell you about the conditions in which people may change their behaviour such as the following:

Are the campaign materials appropriate?	User testing during the development of the materials.
Was awareness raised during the campaign?	Use a questionnaire with a sample of the target audience to test knowledge before and after the campaign.
Was there a change in the referral patterns to services? Is there a lasting effect in changes to referral patterns?	Monitoring service referral statistics before, during and after the project.

Example 4: Child protection for rural community workers

Aim	Description/strategy	Evaluation questions	Data Source
To improve the knowledge of community workers in rural NSW about their legal responsibilities in relation to children at risk of abuse or neglect.	The project will develop and distribute a self-paced DVD that assists community services staff in rural NSW to learn about their mandatory child protection reporting responsibilities.	Did you increase the knowledge of community workers?	Survey or interview community workers to assess their levels of knowledge on the topic prior to their accessing the resource. Re-test their levels of knowledge on the topic at an appropriate time after the resource has been distributed.
		Was the content accurate?	The content will be developed to be consistent with the Child Protection Interagency Guidelines. An expert reference panel will be established that will include child protection specialists and legal specialists. The expert panel will review the draft content and final content for accuracy.
		Was the content useful to learners?	a) User testing of draft content with a group of potential users b) Survey a sample of users after the product has been distributed. Questions could include: was it useful, did you like the content and layout/format, what would you do differently?
		Who uses the resource?	Survey sample of people the resource was distributed to three months after distribution to determine whether they used it.

Example 5: Aboriginal tenants' rights in NSW

Aim	Description/strategy	Evaluation questions	Data Source
To improve the	Aboriginal tenants in NSW	Was the content accurate?	The content of both the

knowledge of Aboriginal tenants in NSW about their legal rights and obligations when renting.	lack knowledge about their rights and obligations when renting. This project aims to address this by producing a wallet card with key information about NSW tenancy laws and by running community legal education sessions for community leaders.		workshop and wallet card will be reviewed by legal specialists in tenancy.
		Was the content useful to users?	Focus groups for user testing during development of both the wallet card and community legal education sessions. A survey of those who attended the community legal education session, three months later will also be undertaken.
		Who uses the wallet card?	This will be answered through following up with a sample of those who have used it three months on. Questions could include: was it useful, did you like the content and layout/format, what would you do differently, etc.
		a) Was the wallet card developed according to recommended guidelines?	a) Production process conforms with Foundation guidelines for plain language legal publications.
		b) Were the community legal education sessions run according to recommended practice in the sector?	b) Community legal education conforms to NACLC CLE recommended guidelines.
		Was the community legal education session attended by the target audience?	Participant lists

Final Grant Report

Submitting a Final Report is the last step in the grant process and is a mandatory part of your Grant Agreement with the Foundation.

Your Final Report is due to the Foundation within **three months** of project completion. This is when you have finished all of the work involved and an evaluation of the project has taken place.

Note: the final payment for the grant will only be paid once the final report is received and approved.

How to submit a Final Report

The Foundation will give you a copy of the final report template before you start your project, so that you know what information we expect. We will then send you an electronic version of the form prior to the completion of your project.

Your report will **only** be accepted in this format. We do not accept reports written in the form of a letter or in a different format created by your organisation.

Providing Grant materials

You are also required to provide six hard copies of any grant materials with your final report, plus an electronic copy if relevant. Copies are retained as follows:
- 2 copies are kept in the LJF library
- 2 copies are sent to the Legal Information Access Centre (LIAC) at the State Library of NSW.
- 2 copies may be used by the LJF both to promote your product to other groups who can use it with their clients, and to demonstrate the practical and valuable outcomes of our grants program to our stakeholders.

Why do we request a Final Report?

The final report describes the project, identifies the outcome, explains the evaluation process and findings, and most importantly, tells us what you learnt from implementing the project.

The final report:
- provides important and useful information about what happened in the project, whether you achieved your aim, the success factors and the obstacles
- acquits the funds provided by the LJF to your organisation for this project
- gives you the opportunity to provide feedback on the Foundation’s grants process.

We are particularly interested in hearing about unanticipated outcomes (both good and bad) and the factors that either made your project a success, or caused you some headaches by hampering your work. This is all useful information that we can share with others who are working with a similar client group or who are thinking about implementing a similar initiative.

We have built up a bank of final reports so that we can share the information and learning in them with intending applicants, or others who are interested in the sorts of projects that we fund. You can access our Final Reports bank on our website here: http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/grants/finalreports.

Our grant agreement with you advises you that we may publish your final report.