



WSBA Powerful Communities Projects

To deliver on its mission to serve the public and members of the Bar, ensure the integrity of the legal profession, and champion justice, the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) is seeking organizations to partner on a Powerful Communities Project. These partnerships further the following WSBA purposes expressed in General Rule 12.2(a):

- Promote an effective legal system, accessible to all (GR 12.2(a)(2))
- Provide services to its members and the public (GR 12.2(a)(3))

These partnerships fall within the following activities specifically authorized by General Rule 12.2(b):

- Encourage public service by members and support programs providing legal services to those in need (GR 12.2(b)(18))
- Maintain and foster programs of public information and education about the law and the legal system (GR 12.2(b)(19))

Background

As a member of the [Alliance for Equal Justice](#), the WSBA is working toward implementing the [State Plan](#) for the Coordinated Delivery of Civil Legal Aid to Low-Income People (“State Plan”), which guides the Alliance’s collective efforts to expand access to justice and eliminate barriers that perpetuate poverty and deny justice. Goal Three of the State Plan focuses on ensuring that low income members of underserved and underrepresented communities get legal assistance regardless of geographic and/or demographic circumstances.

By partnering on a *Powerful Communities Project*, the WSBA intends to support organizations implementing strategies of Goal Three by helping them jumpstart new community-based projects and/or expand existing programs that benefit and provide services to low income people. This partnership includes support to organizations serving low income members of the veteran community so as to advance the WSBA’s [Call to Duty initiative](#), which encourages bar members to serve veterans’ legal needs.

Examples of underserved and underrepresented communities for the purposes of *Powerful Communities Projects* include people who experience poverty and are:

- People with disabilities
- People in the child welfare system or juvenile justice system
- Juveniles and young adults (15-21 years old)

- Veterans and military service members experiencing poverty
- Incarcerated/formerly incarcerated persons and people with criminal records
- Immigrants regardless of status
- Incarcerated/formerly incarcerated persons and people with criminal records
- LGBTQ-identified persons
- Native Americans
- People who experience poverty and Living in areas with little or no access to local pro bono, free or other affordable legal services
- People of color
- Juveniles and young adults (15-21 years old)
- Survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual assault
- Veterans and military service members experiencing poverty

Vision for Success

Our vision of success for *Powerful Communities Projects* is that by partnering with organizations who are working with underserved and underrepresented communities:

- More people who experience poverty and injustice will have equitable access to free or affordable, quality legal services;
- Collaborative partnerships with community-based organizations serving underrepresented communities will be created or deepened; and
- More pro bono opportunities for bar members to serve underserved and underrepresented communities

Eligibility

We encourage applicants to consider collaborating on (a) joint proposal(s). WSBA Public Service staff can assist interested applicants to connect with each other to explore collaboration. The following entities or organizations are invited to apply:

- Washington State Minority Bar Associations ([MBAs](#));
- Qualified Legal Service Providers ([QLSPs](#)); and
- Nonprofit organizations serving veterans and military service members

Selection Criteria and Priorities

Application materials will be reviewed holistically with priority given to proposals that:

- Advance Goal Three of the [State Plan](#) which aims to ensure that low income members of underserved and underrepresented communities get legal assistance regardless of geographic and/or demographic circumstances.
- Involve developing or deepening partnerships with community organizations based in a geographic area(s) that do not have access to locally-based legal services

- Involve developing or deepening partnerships with community organizations who are led by or work directly with underrepresented or underserved communities.
- Anticipate a sustainable, longer term and ongoing relationship with an underrepresented or underserved community.
- Create a collaboration between two or more eligible applicants.
- Help smaller organizations who may not have access to funding sources.

Examples of Proposal Ideas

The following list is not exhaustive and is intended to serve as inspiration:

- Convening underrepresented communities and organizations in underserved geographic areas to identify the legal needs of that community in order to organize targeted legal assistance
- Funding staff or volunteer time to encourage relationship development with community-based organizations and a consistent presence in spaces where community members access information and resources
- Trainings for community-based organizations and agencies on how to issue spot legal matters and make appropriate legal referrals
- Development of technology which increases and expands the reach of pro bono legal assistance
- Legal advice clinics where volunteers provide legal information, advice and/or limited or extensive services such as legal research, forms preparation, drafting correspondence, brief communication with opposing party, etc.
- “Know Your Rights” workshops and similar legal information sessions
- Financial support for ongoing work that enables organizations to expand or improve services

Partnership Benefits and Expectations

By partnering with the WSBA on a *Powerful Communities Project*, the WSBA expects the contracting organization to take responsibility for developing and implementing their *Powerful Communities Project*. As a partner to the *Powerful Communities Project*, the WSBA can provide up to \$3000 to for operation of the contracted project, WSBA’s assistance with marketing and communications among WSBA membership as well as assistance with facilitating connections with other organizations doing a *Powerful Communities Project*. The following list is not exhaustive and is intended to provide some ideas for how funds could be used to support the contracted program:

- Catering (no alcoholic beverages)
- Facility rental
- Copying, printing costs
- Advertising and marketing costs
- Cost of malpractice insurance
- Purchase of a portable printer, laptop, or other technology or audio-visual tools (which will be used for ongoing related work)
- Costs for interpreters or translators

- Filing fees (e.g., legal name changes or naturalization (N-400) applications)
- Administrative fees (e.g. fund data collection, research, and analysis or project development or implementation)

Proposal Requirements

- Malpractice insurance coverage for volunteers that are providing legal advice or brief services (partnering with another organization to provide insurance coverage is acceptable and encouraged).
- Secure an accessible venue location.
- Organizations will be required to contract with the WSBA to develop and implement their *Powerful Communities Project*.
- Organizations will be required to submit a report detailing outcomes and how funds were used within 30 days of when funding was used. Recipients may be asked to provide formal or informal reports to WSBA Board of Governors, future potential *Powerful Communities Project* partners, or other community-based organizations.
- Signing a written contract with WSBA, including your agreement that WSBA may audit your use of the funds for the intended purpose.
- Funds must be used by September 30, 2019.
- Any unused portion of the funds not used by September 30, 2019, must be returned to WSBA.

Proposal Review Process

A Proposal Review Committee will include representation from the Washington State Bar Foundation, the WSBA's Diversity and Inclusion and Access to Justice Teams, and Alliance partners in various geographic areas of the state.

Timeline

- Proposals are due on or before 5:00 pm (PST), June 17, 2019.
- Partners will be notified by email by June 24, 2019.
- Funds must be used by September 30, 2019.

Application can be filled out [here](#).