



MASSACHUSETTS BAR FOUNDATION

Keeping the promise of justice since 1964

2017/2018 IOLTA GRANTS PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

Application Preparation and Submission

How much money is available for grants this year?

The amount is not yet confirmed. IOLTA revenue can fluctuate dramatically from year to year. At this point, the MBF is hopeful that we will be able to award approximately \$2 million in grants. This amount is less than what we awarded in the 2016/2017 grant year.

Should those seeking renewed funding expect to receive funding equal to the amount received last year?

Continued funding is not guaranteed for any applicant. In addition, candidates for renewed funding do not automatically receive "level" funding or a specific percentage increase/decrease. This is a competitive process. All applications have an equal chance to obtain a grant. Grant amounts are decided annually by reviewers and can vary greatly from year to year and program to program.

I did not receive funding for my program last year. Should I resubmit my application for reconsideration this year?

Organizations are discouraged from applying for reconsideration of a program that is not substantially different from that submitted and rejected in a recent grant cycle. We appreciate your cooperation regarding this matter.

I am having trouble keeping within the page limit. Is it OK to add one additional page?

Additional pages will be removed. Please keep within the page limit.

Is it OK to use a small font to help meet the page limit?

Please remember that reviewers will be reading numerous applications. You should strive to ensure that your materials are as "reader friendly" as possible. Please complete your application in 12 point font. "Narrow" versions of fonts are extremely difficult to read and are strongly discouraged.

Can I save paper by double-siding printed materials?

No. Please provide materials on single-sided, 8 1/2" by 11" paper, using 1 inch margins.

The application looks similar to last year's. Can I just resubmit my application from last year?

No. Updated proposals reflect progress made since previous submissions. Please give reviewers the most up to date information about your program, ensuring that new information doesn't get overshadowed by repetitive, outdated text.

Deadline--Is it ok to have my application postmarked by the deadline?

No. The application must be received by the MBF on or before the stated deadline.

Can I get an extension on the deadline?

Extensions are granted in extremely rare instances. Should you require an extension, please submit your request in advance of the deadline.

I can't fit all of my information in the fields provided on the Summary Form. Is it ok to modify them?

No. All Summary Forms fields must be identical to the original form. You may wish to save a blank copy of the form before typing on it to ensure that your final copy meets this requirement.

Should I attach extra pages or our brochure to the Summary Form?

No. Please do not attach anything extra to this form. It will be removed. There are no exceptions.

Some of the questions on the Summary Form cover the same information that is in the Narrative component of the application. Can I just refer the reader to the Narrative?

No. Each section of your application should be considered a "stand alone" document, as it is utilized for different parts of the review process.

I typed all of my information into the form field, but when I print, some of it disappears. What happened?

You have overpopulated the field. Reduce the amount of text and your form will print appropriately.

Is it ok if we write our own letters of support and then have them signed by the supporter of our project?

Please do not write your own letters of support. Short, personal letters provide reviewers valuable insight into your program. When they are clearly written by the applicant or identical to that submitted by another writer of a letter of support for your agency, they are no longer meaningful.

Can a letter of support be submitted separately? How many copies should I submit.

No. All letters of support must be submitted together with your application and received by the application deadline.

I am a current grantee and I already submitted my organization's most recent financial information along with my routine reports. Do I have to include audits in my application?

Yes. The audits submitted with the application will provide an important financial overview to your reviewers. The audits in current grant files are not distributed to reviewers.

Other Hints:

- Check and recheck your budget form to be sure that all columns add up correctly.
- Avoid jargon and repetition. Clearly demonstrate how the proposed activities meet the community's needs and the MBF's priorities, rather than just stating that they do.
- Define terms—not just those internal to your organization/field, but those that may have multiple meanings. For example, if you are using the word, "advocate," either as a verb or noun, please define what it means in the context of the program (i.e., is the advocate a lawyer? What services are included in the advocacy provided?).
- Include relevant statistical and anecdotal information that demonstrates a need for the activities proposed.
- Before submitting your application, double check that you have fully completed the Summary Form—especially the first page which should include your organization's name, program name, and the amount requested.