

IOLA Fund of the State of New York

FY2024 & FY2025 IOLA Grant Cycle

Application Process Questions & Answers (FINAL, as of September 13, 2022)

Eligibility

Question 1: Are organizations which do not yet provide direct civil legal services eligible to apply for IOLA funding?

Answer: Assuming that (a) the organization meets the IOLA Fund's eligibility criteria for grant recipients as described on page 3 of the RFP and set out in full at 21 NYCRR Part 7000.12 and (b) the people to be served by the proposed programs meet the client financial eligibility rules set out in full at 21 NYCRR 7000.14, then an organization likely would be eligible for IOLA Fund grants.

Eligibility does not guarantee funding. IOLA funds available for distribution may not be sufficient to make distributions to all qualified applicants and the IOLA Fund's Board of Trustees considers a number of factors in setting its funding priorities among qualified applicants.

Question 2: Are current IOLA grantees precluded from applying to this opportunity if they currently have outstanding reporting due to the IOLA Fund?

Answer: Current IOLA grantees are not precluded from applying to this opportunity, provided they still meet the qualification requirements set out on page 3 of the RFP.

In its review of applications, however, IOLA does consider an applicant's organizational strength, programming,

financial strength, and whether the grantee continues to be in good standing. An existing IOLA grantee may lose points in these areas if the outstanding reporting is indicative of challenges with the organization's strength, programming, financial strength, and/or compliance with contract requirements.

- Question 3:** Explain the limitation on funding for criminal cases. Is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit eligible for IOLA funding if it provides:
- “mitigation and advocacy support services” to defender organizations,
 - “support services to young people in the criminal justice system” to defender organizations, or
 - “civic restoration”?

Answer: IOLA funding may not be used for the provision of legal assistance with respect to any criminal proceeding or any action in the nature of habeas corpus collaterally attacking a criminal conviction.

IOLA funding supports civil legal aid programs that serve low income New Yorkers. To the extent that the services fall within the definition of CLS or AOJ, are civil in nature, the people to be served meet the client financial eligibility rules, and the organization meets the IOLA Fund's other criteria for grant recipients described on page 3 of the RFP and set out in full at 21 NYCRR Part 7000.12, then the applicant is likely eligible for IOLA funding.

Eligibility does not guarantee funding. IOLA funds available for distribution may not be sufficient to make distributions to all qualified applicants and IOLA Fund's Board of Trustees considers a number of factors in settings its funding priorities among qualified applicants.

Question 4: Our organization is a settlement house with a legal department that helps with immigration, housing, family law, and civil law issues. Are we eligible to apply for IOLA funds?

Answer: Non-profit entities, tax exempt under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, including organizations designated to be a 501(c)(3) non-profits, are eligible to apply for IOLA funds, assuming that the organization meets the IOLA Fund's other eligibility criteria for grant recipients as described on page 3 of the RFP and set out in full at 21 NYCRR Part 7000.12.

IOLA funding supports civil legal aid programs that serve low income New Yorkers. To the extent that the services fall within the definition of CLS or AOJ, are civil in nature, the people to be served meet the client financial eligibility rules, and the organization meets the IOLA Fund's other criteria for grant recipients described on page 3 of the RFP and set out in full at 21 NYCRR Part 7000.12, then the applicant is likely eligible for IOLA funding.

Eligibility does not guarantee funding. IOLA funds available for distribution may not be sufficient to make distributions to all qualified applicants and IOLA Fund's Board of Trustees considers a number of factors in settings its funding priorities among qualified applicants.

Question 5: What is the necessary poverty level of the client base?

Answer: Subject to certain exceptions and circumstances, persons eligible to receive legal services with IOLA funds are limited to those whose incomes do not exceed 125% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. [See](#) 21 NYCRR Part 7000.14.

Pre-Submission Documents

Question 6: Where can applicants find the “Current Staffing” pre-submission document form?

Answer: All applicants should utilize IOLA’s *Current Staffing* form. The form can be found in two places:

1. The “FY2024 2025 IOLA Application and Instructions FINAL” zip folder on the IOLA website (<https://www.iola.org/>). Form templates can be found in the “RFP Additional Documents” subfolder, in the “Pre-Submission Document Forms” folder.
2. In Grants Gateway, once an applicant has initiated an application, templates are available via links in the “Pre-Submission Documents” section.

Question 7: How should applicants with multiple missions complete the “Organization Budget” pre-submission document?

Answer: Applicants with multiple missions (e.g. criminal legal services or shelter services) should report only the budget properly attributable to their civil legal services program.

Question 8: How many months of board minutes are required as part of the application package?

Answer: IOLA requires the meeting minutes for the last four Board of Directors meetings to be submitted as supporting Pre-Submission documents. Draft minutes are acceptable.

Question 9: On the “Current Revenue” Pre-Submission document form, should applicants use their fiscal year or the New York State fiscal year?

Answer: Applicants should complete the Revenue Worksheets for their current fiscal year. Any committed revenues can be included. Expected or anticipated, but not committed, revenue should not be included in the Revenue Worksheet, but can be described in Section D.2. Financial

Narrative, Projected Finances. **Note: This is a correction to the answer provided during the Pre-Bid Conference on 8/16/2022.**

Question 10: If an applicants' revenue sources exceed the number of lines provided in the Revenue Worksheet Pre-Submission template, how should the applicant provide that information? The template is locked, and additional schedules cannot be added.

Answer: Applicants with more information than lines on the Revenue Detail worksheet should attach a schedule with the additional information and put the subtotal from that schedule on the worksheet. In the example below, \$200,000 would be listed on the Revenue Detail worksheet and the following information would be on an attached schedule:

Item b:	Foundations	Source	Amount
1.	Foundation A		20,000
2.	Foundation B		30,000
3.	Foundation C		50,000
4.	See attached		100,000
Total:			\$200,000

Applicants can combine the template and an additional schedule by either (1) physically printing the completed worksheets/schedules and scanning them together to create a single PDF, or (2) printing the Revenue Worksheet template as a PDF and electronically merging this with the additional schedule to create a single PDF. The resulting single PDF can be uploaded as a Pre-Submission document.

Question 11: If an applicant's current staffing is significantly higher at the time of application than as of 3/31/22, should the applicant use the most recent staffing levels when completing the "Current Staffing" Pre-Submission document, or still use the 3/31/22 staffing levels?

Answer: The "Current Staffing" Pre-Submission document should reflect staffing as of March 31, 2022. If the program staffing has changed substantially since that time, please describe the changes in the "Service Delivery" narrative.

Question 12: How many resumes of principal staff does IOLA prefer in an application?

Answer: Applicants should include the resumes of a few key staff only. For example, the resumes of executive or senior management staff (Executive Director, Legal Director, Supervising Attorney of the practice groups for which you seek funding) may be appropriate.

Question 13: Does the EO Certification Pre-Submission document require a wet signature, or is a digital signature acceptable?

Answer: Digital and/or scanned signatures are acceptable on the Pre-Submission documents.

Question 14: Are Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) forms required?

Answer: It is a requirement of Prequalification that non-profit vendors with New York State have an MWBE policy. Documentation of policies is not currently required, however, State Agencies and/or the State employee charged with Prequalification review may request a copy of this (or any policy required for Prequalification) at any time.

Being Prequalified in the Grants Gateway is requirement to be eligible to apply to this grant opportunity. Note, however, that the Prequalification Application is discrete and separate from this RFP. Applicants do *not* have to provide an MWBE policy as part of the IOLA application. Applicants should not submit any additional materials beyond those requested in the RFP.

Question 15: For the purposes of completing the Pre-Submission Document Requirements, does an organization whose program provides referrals considered one that provides direct services and need to submit Client Grievance Procedures or Client Eligibility Guidelines?

Answer: Applicants whose only direct services to low-income clients are referrals are not required to provide Client Grievance Procedures or Client Eligibility Guidelines.

Question 16: What kind of documentation should applicants who do not provide direct legal services provide as alternatives to the Client Grievance Procedures and Client Eligibility Guidelines required documents?

Answer: As an alternative to Client Grievance Procedures, these applicants should provide internal policy documents that govern how their organizations handle complaints or grievances from the communities they serve.

As an alternative to Client Eligibility Guidelines, these applicants should provide internal policy documents that govern how the organizations define the community they serve and prioritize the delivery of their services among those seeking assistance.

Program Description & Work Plan

Question 17: A question regarding "Multi-Unit CLS" was eliminated from the Service Delivery narrative. Is there a new version of the question?

Answer: In the Service Delivery section of the RFP, IOLA has eliminated a question which asked applicants to quantify their geographic distribution of services. IOLA no longer requires applicants to quantify their geographic reach; rather, the service delivery areas and achievements should be qualitatively described in the Program

Description narrative, C.2. and C.4.

Question 18: In the Work Plan, is Community Legal Education (CLE) for non-attorneys? Is Community Legal Education for attorneys "counted", or considered differently?

Answer: When developing the Work Plan (Goals), Community Legal Education refers to the legal education your organization provides to client-eligible communities. In some instances, these audiences may incidentally include attorneys, but their inclusion is not a consideration.

Note: continuing legal education, a requirement for admitted attorneys, is not the same as *community* legal education. IOLA does not collect quantitative data about continuing legal education.

Question 19: How should applicants develop a two-year projection for the *Group Services* contract goal?

Answer: When developing the Group Services goal, applicants should project the groups to be served (via open and closed cases) in Fiscal Year 2024 and add that figure to the groups projected to be served in Fiscal Year 2025. This will result in a unique count of groups for each contract year and is in line with IOLA's statistical reporting on an annual basis.

Question 20: When discussing "Achievements in the Last Fiscal Year" and "financial projections for the next fiscal year" (RFP page 9), which fiscal year should applicants refer?

Answer: When discussing "Achievements in the Last Fiscal Year" in the Program Description, applicants should summarize the most significant achievements during the New York State fiscal year ending March 31, 2022. Financial projections should reflect projections for the coming New York State fiscal year, April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024.

Question 21: While comparing the FY 2024-2025 RFP to the FY 2022-23 RFP, one of the examples in the *Work Plan Overview* Section was omitted.

Answer: There is no substantive significance to this omission. The omission was made for formatting, not programmatic, reasons.

The list that appears in the *Work Plan Overview* section of page 12 of the RFP is demonstrative only; it is not a comprehensive list of services that are or may be funded, but rather examples of how to respond to this specific prompt in the application.

Budgeting & Financial

Question 22: Should the budget and programmatic goals include March 2023, or just April 2023 through March 2025?

Answer: The grant Budget and Work Plan (goals) should refer to the 24-month period starting April 1, 2023 and ending March 31, 2025. March 1, 2023 – March 31, 2023 will be a planning period for this contract; no expenses incurred during this time will be reimbursable.

Question 23: Should budget requests be for one or two years?

Answer: Budget requests should reflect the 24-month period starting April 1, 2023 and ending March 31, 2025. Note that IOLA seeks budget information in two ways.

One, applicants submit a two-year proposed grant budget. The "Budget" or the "Budget Template" is the collective reference in Grants Gateway to the various fields (i.e., "Expenditure Summary," "Personal Services," and "Non Personal Services") where an applicant is prompted to enter its requested budget. There is no document entitled "budget template" or "expenditure budget" for applicants to upload for their proposed grant

budget. To access and edit the Expenditure Summary, the applicant must first initiate the application in Grants Gateway.

Two, applicants submit their one-year Organization Budget for the current fiscal year as a pre-submission document. No particular format is required; applicants may submit, e.g., the budget as approved by their Board of Directors. There is not document entitled "budget template" for applicants to upload.

Question 24: In the Financial Narrative, do the subsections (Current Financial Status, Projected Finances, and Proposed Grant) refer to the applicant organization as a whole or just the civil legal services program?

Answer: Applicants with multiple missions (e.g. criminal legal services or shelter services) should complete questions D.1. and D.2. relative to their entire organizations, but also including and focusing on their civil legal aid program. In D.1., note any financial issues or situations that directly relate to your civil legal aid program. In D.2., highlight any notable cuts, expansions, or reductions in your civil legal aid program.

Applicants whose sole mission is the delivery of civil legal aid should report the financial status and projected finances of their entire organizations.

The Proposed Grant (D.3.) references the civil legal services program to be funded.

Question 25: How should applicants answer the "Proposed Grant" section of the Financial Narrative? Should applicants detail the requested grant budget? What if the awarded amount differs from the request?

Answer: In the Financial Narrative, applicants should not detail every amount of the grant budget. Rather, the narrative should provide qualitative context for the services to be

funded. The budget request will be detailed in the “Expenditure Budget” in Grants Gateway. Please see page 11 of the RFP for related instructions.

If awarded, applicants have the opportunity to update their budget.

Question 26: In the “Expenditure Budget” section of the application, is IOLA seeking the budget for the entire organization or legal services project, or just the program to be funded?

Answer: The “Expenditure Budget” is a series of linked web forms in Grants Gateway where budget details are entered and saved. Those details populate an “Expenditure Summary”, which is the application budget, or “ask”. Therefore, only expenses related to the application should be included.

Question 27: In the “Expenditure Summary” on Grants Gateway, what are the “Match Funds” and “Other Funds”?

Answer: The “Match Funds” and “Other Funds” sections available in Grants Gateway are standardized fields available to every State grant opportunity on that platform.

IOLA does not require matching or other funds to be identified in the application budget. Please omit figures in these columns.

Question 28: Where can applicants find the budget forms in Grants Gateway?

Answer: IOLA seeks budget information in two ways.

One, applicants submit a two-year proposed grant budget. The "Budget" or the "Budget Template" is the collective reference in Grants Gateway to the various fields (i.e., "Expenditure Summary," "Personal Services," and "Non Personal Services") where an applicant is prompted to enter its requested budget. There is no

document entitled "budget template", "budget forms" or "expenditure budget" for applicants to upload for their proposed grant budget. To access and edit the Expenditure Summary, the applicant must first initiate the application in Grants Gateway.

Two, applicants submit their one-year Organization Budget for the current fiscal year as a pre-submission document. No particular format is required; applicants may submit, e.g., the budget as approved by their Board of Directors. There is not document entitled "budget template" for applicants to upload.

Question 29: Can IOLA provide a sample budget to assist applicants in preparing their applications?

Answer: IOLA does not provide applicants with sample budgets. It would be difficult to identify a typical budget because IOLA grantee programs vary greatly in size and scope, IOLA awards vary significantly, IOLA grants include general operating support that may be applied in a number of different ways. All grant budgets should be made in accordance with the guidance provided in the RFP (pages 11-13) and in this Question and Answer document.

Expense Eligibility

Question 30: Does IOLA provide general operating support?

Answer: IOLA grants awarded under this RFP support general operating expenses, including administrative expenses. IOLA supports sound infrastructure that makes excellent civil legal aid programs possible.

Question 31: Can IOLA funds cover finance or development staff? Does it matter if these positions are internal or external?

Answer: IOLA grants awarded under this RFP support general

operating expenses, including administrative expenses like development and finance staff. IOLA supports sound infrastructure that makes excellent civil legal aid programs possible.

IOLA funds can support both contract and FTE staff. To the extent an applicant plans on using contract staff, they should be identified in the “Contractual Services” section of the application budget.

All contract budgets are subject to review by the Office of the State Comptroller and subject to the terms of the New York State Master Contract for Grants and IOLA regulations.

Applicants with IOLA-funded subcontracts should pay special attention to NYS Master Contract §IV.B. In particular, all subcontracts in excess of \$100,000 must include the provisions required by NYS Master Contract §IV.B.(2) and be submitted to IOLA for review and approval prior to execution and a final executed copy of the subcontract must be filed with IOLA. In addition, subcontractors will be required to submit a Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire and proof of Worker’s Compensation and Disability Insurance coverage to IOLA before a contract is submitted for execution.

Question 32: Can IOLA funds cover upgrades to an organization's case management system?

Can IOLA funds cover capital expenses, such as the acquisition or construction of staff parking?

Answer: IOLA grants awarded under this RFP support general operating expenses, including OTPS and capital expenses. Upgrades to a legal case management system, to other IT systems, or to physical spaces would be allowable. IOLA supports sound infrastructure that makes excellent civil legal aid programs possible.

Infrastructure expenditures that are allowable are not guaranteed funding. IOLA Funds available for distribution may not be sufficient to make distributions to all qualified recipients for all allowable expenditures and IOLA Fund's Board of Trustees considers a number of factors in setting its funding priorities. Applicants are encouraged to request funding that is appropriate, reasonable, and consistent with their proposed projects and principal activities.

To the extent an applicant plans on using contractors for capital or other OTPS expenses, they should be identified in the "Contractual Services" section of the application budget.

All contract budgets are subject to review by the Office of the State Comptroller and subject to the terms of the New York State Master Contract for Grants and IOLA regulations.

Applicants with IOLA-funded subcontracts should pay special attention to NYS Master Contract §IV.B. In particular, all subcontracts in excess of \$100,000 must include the provisions required by NYS Master Contract §IV.B.(2) and be submitted to IOLA for review and approval prior to execution and a final executed copy of the subcontract must be filed with IOLA. In addition, subcontractors will be required to submit a Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire and proof of Worker's Compensation and Disability Insurance coverage to IOLA before a contract is submitted for execution.

Question 33: Can IOLA funds be used to pay court filing fees on behalf of indigent clients?

Answer: IOLA grants awarded under this RFP support general operating expenses. Court filing fees may be allowable as an "Other" OTPS expense.

All contract budgets are subject to review by the Office of

the State Comptroller and subject to the terms of the New York State Master Contract for Grants and IOLA regulations.

Question 34: What is the acceptable overhead rate for IOLA applications?

Answer: IOLA will accept a 10% *de minimus* Indirect Cost Rate (ICR). If applicants seek to charge a higher ICR, they must provide documentation of a *government-approved* ICR.

If awarded, applicants have an opportunity to refine their contract budgets.

Question 35: If an applicant organization started a project before a grant award is received, can it apply those funds to the activities previously done on the project?

Answer: Only expenses incurred from April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2025 will be reimbursable under the FY24-25 IOLA Contracts.

Question 36: Is lobbying a permissible IOLA expense?

Answer: All IOLA grants are subject to the NYS Master Contract for Grants, which provides: “funds provided pursuant to the Master Contract shall not be used for any partisan political activity, or for activities that attempt to influence legislation or election or defeat of any candidate for public office” (§ I.R.) Also, under 21 NYCRR Part 7000.13, IOLA funds may not be used for any of the following purposes:

- (1) Legal assistance with respect to any criminal proceeding or any action in the nature of habeas corpus collaterally attacking a criminal conviction
- (2) Political purposes
- (3) Endowment campaign support.

CLS/AOJ Classification

Question 37: If an applicant believes it can be considered both a Civil Legal Services and Administration of Justice provider, should they address this in the application?

Answer: Regardless of whether an applicant believes it would be categorized as a CLS or an AOJ provider, applicants should simply answer the question prompts provided in the RFP.

IOLA will decide in its sole discretion whether an applying entity is to be considered CLS or AOJ pursuant to Section 7000.12 of the Trustees Regulations, as well as based on the application and all supporting documents submitted by an applicant.

Question 38: Are applicants required to upload documents or otherwise indicate their self-identification as an CLS or AOJ provider?

Answer: No. IOLA will decide in its sole discretion whether an applying entity is to be considered CLS or AOJ pursuant to Section 7000.12 of the Trustees Regulations, as well as based on the application and all supporting documents submitted by an applicant.

Regardless of whether an applicant believes it would be categorized as a CLS or an AOJ provider, applicants should simply answer the question prompts provided in the RFP. Applicants should not submit any additional materials beyond those requested in the RFP.

Grants Gateway

Question 39: Must applications be submitted via the Grants Gateway?

Answer: All applications must be submitted via Grants Gateway. Paper applications will not be accepted.

Question 40: How can I find the application in Grants Gateway; I cannot find it in our organization's account.

Answer: Applicants can find the IOLA grant opportunity on the Grants Gateway "Grant Opportunity Portal" (https://grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants_NYSGG/module/nysgg/GOPortal.aspx .)

Applications will not appear in an organization's account; applicants must affirmatively find the opportunity via the Grant Opportunity Portal. The ability to search and apply for opportunities may be impacted by an individual's Grants Gateway user role. Applicants that are having trouble navigating the Grants Gateway, including user role assignment, should contact the Grants Gateway helpdesk at GrantsGateway@its.ny.gov or 518-474-5595.

Question 41: Where can applicants find the "Apply for Grant Opportunity" button to initiate the application?

Answer: When applicants are logged into their Grants Gateway profile, they can view available opportunities via the "View Opportunities" button on the top of the page. The ability to search and apply for opportunities may be impacted by an individual's Grants Gateway user role.

Note that if applicants are not logged into Grants Gateway and find the opportunity via the "Grant Opportunity Portal", they will not see the "Apply for a Grant Opportunity" button.

Applicants that are having trouble navigating the Grants Gateway, including user role assignment, should contact the Grants Gateway helpdesk at GrantsGateway@its.ny.gov or 518-474-5595.

Question 42: If an applicant is planning on moving its administrative offices in 2023, how should they respond to the "Project Site Addresses" section?

Answer: Please enter the organization’s *current* administrative offices. If awarded grant funds, the organization will have the opportunity to provide its updated address to IOLA.

Question 43: How should applicants answer the “Agency Specific Region” prompt in the “Site Addresses” section of the Grants Gateway application? The only options are “N/A” or blank.

Answer: Applicants do not have to respond to this question. Please choose “N/A”.

This is a change from prior IOLA applications, which prompted applicants to identify the primary geographic scope of their services. Service delivery areas and achievements should be qualitatively described in the Program Description narrative, C.2. and C.4.

Question 44: Are there any restrictions on including images in the narrative responses that are uploaded into Grants Gateway? For example, would it be possible to include charts/tables, organizational logo, or other images?

Answer: Applicants are allowed to include images in the narrative descriptions and/or Pre-Submission Documents it uploads. Please note, however, that the images will count towards page limitations. Cited information (e.g., hyperlinks to website pages or photos) may not be considered.

Question 45: Is the Grants Gateway retiring and transitioning to SFS? How will the transition affect the IOLA program reporting and budget process in 2023?

Answer: As members of the New York State nonprofit community, you might be aware of the upcoming changes to the NYS Grants Management ecosystem. It is expected that, on or about April 1, 2023, the NYS Grants Gateway will be retired and all grant contract work will be transitioned to the Statewide Financial System (SFS).

This anticipated change does not impact how IOLA will accept applications for the FY24-25 RFP. IOLA is learning more about how this transition will impact our future work with applicants and grantees and will communicate updates as we receive them.

Please visit the Grants Management "Transition to SFS" website to learn more:

<https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/transition-sfs>

Question 46: Regarding Grants Gateway Prequalification, do applicants have to upload documents in every section of the Document Vault? Some items have not been updated in some time; should those being updated?

Answer: Being Prequalified in the Grants Gateway is requirement to be eligible to apply to this grant opportunity. Note, however, that the Prequalification Application is discrete and separate from this RFP. Detailed information about Prequalification, including the required documents and the need to update any out-of-date documentation, can be found here: <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/get-prequalified>.

Question 47: Applicants that are newly formed 501(c)(3) organizations or organizations newly independent from a fiscal sponsor may not yet have the financial documents (IRS-990, CHAR 500, Financial Audit) required by Grants Gateway Prequalification. Will the absence of these documents, and thus Prequalification, preclude the organization from applying to this RFP?

Answer: Being Prequalified in the Grants Gateway is requirement to be eligible to apply to this grant opportunity. Newly formed or newly independent organizations may be eligible for special consideration in regards to Prequalification. Please reach out to the Grants Gateway team to learn more (GrantsGateway@its.ny.gov or 518-474-5595).

Miscellaneous

Question 48: How much funding is available for this grant opportunity?

Answer: For the 2024 & 2025 fiscal years, IOLA anticipates distributing approximately \$50 million annually. For budgeting purposes, IOLA will assume level funding for fiscal years 2024 & 2025 for an anticipated two-year total of \$100 million.

Question 49: Does the March 1, 2023 start date mean current IOLA contracts will end February 28, 2023 instead of March 31, 2023? If so, will the funding amounts for the two contract cycles be prorated to reflect the adjusted terms?

Answer: Current IOLA contracts will not be adjusted or impacted by the FY24-25 grant awards. FY24-25 grant awards will cover reimbursable expenses from April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2025.

Question 50: Is there a list of current grant recipients and the amounts received available?

Answer: A list of current IOLA grant recipients can be found on the IOLA website: <https://www.iola.org/all-documents/177-iola-grants-press-release-3-17-2021/file>.

Question 51: What is the range and average or median size of grants? Do grants awarded vary by region based on population?

Answer: IOLA's current grants range from \$100,000 to \$10,080,000 over two years. Grant awards vary due to a number of factors. Please review the list of current IOLA grantees for grant award details.

Question 52: If you could give one piece of advice to a long-term IOLA grantee as they complete their proposal, what would it be? Provide an example of when IOLA granted additional

funds to an existing grantee and explain what was successful with the application.

Answer: For returning applicants, IOLA highly suggests that applicants ensure that their applications are up to date and include thoughtful responses to the RFP prompts, including updated data on community need and programming.

IOLA often increases awards to existing grantees when it has more funding available, and/or when a grantee's application demonstrates a compelling need such as a new office to serve an expanded geographic catchment area, expanded type of case services, or a new method of service delivery. IOLA would expect that applicants seeking additional funding to support expanded services would have already begun implementation with at least partial financial support from other sources.

Question 53: Our staff has more than doubled since our last IOLA application, and our case count has increased commensurately. Would it be reasonable to double our funding request compared to our last application?

Answer: Applicants are encouraged to request funding that is appropriate, reasonable, and consistent with their intended projects, as well as commensurate with their principal activities. It may be appropriate to request double your current IOLA funding, provided the application narrative substantiates the request with data.

Question 54: When IOLA considers an organization that's asking for an increase in funds, does it consider their prior bid request or their funded amount?

Answer: When considering an increase in funding, IOLA is considering the current funding amount, not the prior bid request.

Question 55: If unsuccessful, does IOLA meet with the organization so they can learn how to improve their application?

Answer: Debriefing opportunities are available to applicants that are not awarded funding. Please see page 18 of the RFP for information on how to request a debriefing.

Question 56: When will replies to questions be posted and where?

Answer: A final and comprehensive list of all questions, received in writing and during the Pre-Bid Conference, and the corresponding answers will be posted on <http://www.iola.org> by September 14, 2022.

Question 57: Are reference letters, MOUs, or linkage agreements required as part of the application?

Answer: Applicants should not submit any additional materials beyond those requested in the RFP. Do not submit letters of recommendation. Do not submit MOUs or linkage agreements. Cited information (e.g. hyperlinks to website pages or photos) may not be considered.

Question 58: Are footnotes required to conform with the formatting requirements (Times New Roman, 12-point font)?

Answer: Footnotes do not have to conform to the formatting requirements; traditional footnote formatting can be used. Note that while footnotes and endnotes are permitted, they do count towards page limits.

Question 59: I was unable to download the application material via the IOLA website due to what seems like a site problem. Is there a timeline for the resolution of that problem?

Answer: IOLA is unable to replicate individual issues with accessing the application; the inability to access these documents is likely due to the user's IT system settings. If applicants cannot access the application documents via www.iola.org or the Grants Gateway, please email

IOLAGrants@iola.org for technical assistance.

Question 60: What does the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) consider to be a *current* Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire?

Answer: A current Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire (VRQ) is a New York State contracting, not application, requirement. Any applicants awarded IOLA funding will be required to update their VRQ before contract execution. OSC expects a VRQ to be updated within six months of when it is reviewing the proposed grant contract.

Question 61: If an applicant is not a current IOLA grantee, do they lose 5 points awarded to others who have?

Answer: Applicants who do not have a current IOLA contract do not lose 5 points, however, the highest score they can receive is a 95, where the highest score an existing grantee can receive is 100. Both categories of applicants are otherwise scored identically, and a qualifying score for both is 80.

Current IOLA grantees have the opportunity to score *up to* 5 points if they are a grantee in good standing. An existing IOLA grantee may lose points in this area if organizational challenges, poor communication, or compliance issues became evident during the current contractual period.

The 5 points for “grantees in good standing” is, in part, a way to operationalize IOLA’s statutory imperative to insure stable support for legal services. Fin. Law §97-v(3)(f); 21 NYCRR Part 7000.12(c)(1), (3).