



IOLA Fund of the State of New York Justice Infrastructure Project Governance Application Process Questions & Answers (as of July 23, 2026)

Question 1: What is the scope of the envisioned Governance body’s decision-making authority, given that IOLA will (necessarily) retain authority to determine which infrastructure projects to fund? Is this essentially an advisory council that will make non-binding recommendations to IOLA and/or the community?

Answer: The Justice Infrastructure Project’s vision includes the legal services community owning, maintaining, and governing the resulting tools and improvements developed for the civil legal justice ecosystem. As such, IOLA anticipates the scope of service for the envisioned Governance body to include both advisory and management roles related to the Justice Infrastructure Project. For example, IOLA’s Board of Trustees will retain its authority to make funding decisions, but the envisioned Governance body will advise IOLA and its Board of Trustees on these decisions, including setting funding priorities and evaluating the success and continued funding of existing initiatives.

The nature of the long-term use and ownership of Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives has yet to be determined

Question 2: Will the governance body be able to override decisions made by Justice Infrastructure Projects?

Answer: Currently, the scope of Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives is set by the terms of IOLA grant contracts that are fully funding these initiatives. In the short term, IOLA anticipates that the Governance body would serve in an advisory role to the Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives and IOLA anticipates facilitating conversations between the Governance body and the respective Justice Infrastructure Project initiative(s) regarding significant decisions.

Question 3: How will the envisioned Governance body interact with the statewide intake system contemplated by the infrastructure project?

Answer: IOLA anticipates the envisioned Governance body will interact with all Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives. Applicants should describe their proposed approach to coordinating with organizations leading related Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives in the Description of Governance Approach narrative.

Question 4: Please clarify the intended governance relationship between the Justice Infrastructure Project Governance body and the tools and systems being developed under the separate Justice Infrastructure Project RFPs. The Governance RFP appears to contemplate a policy-setting, prioritization, and decision-making role that could materially influence the technical scope, design, and feature roadmap of projects being procured and/or developed in parallel.

Answer: IOLA anticipates the envisioned Governance body will interact with all Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives. Applicants should describe their proposed approach to coordinating with organizations leading related Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives in the Description of Governance Approach narrative.

Question 5: What is the desired division of authorities between the to-be-established governance body and IOLA itself?

Answer: The Justice Infrastructure Project's vision includes the legal services community owning, maintaining, and governing the resulting tools and improvements developed for the civil legal justice ecosystem. As such, IOLA anticipates the scope of service for the envisioned Governance body to include both advisory and management roles related to the Justice Infrastructure Project. For example, IOLA's Board of Trustees will retain its authority to make funding decisions, but the envisioned Governance body will advise IOLA and its Board of Trustees on these decisions, including on setting funding priorities and evaluating the success and continued funding of existing initiatives.

The nature of the long-term use and ownership of Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives has yet to be determined.

Question 6: Would IOLA consider housing the governance function within an entity selected to lead or participate as a funded partner on another Justice Infrastructure Project component, or is IOLA seeking a separate, independent organization to serve as and/or house the governance body?

Answer: An organization selected to lead or participate as a funded partner on another Justice Infrastructure Project component may be eligible to house the governance function, assuming the organization meets the IOLA Fund's eligibility criteria for grant recipients as described on page 4 of the RFP.

Eligibility does not guarantee funding.

Question 7: Does IOLA plan to open a competitive RFP process for governance after the one-year term of the current RFP ends? If so, does IOLA plan on having governance move to a new entity if a new entity is awarded that contract?

Answer: IOLA plans to award one contract which includes a one-year initial period and three one-year optional renewals for a total term of four-years, if all options are exercised. IOLA reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to re-issue this RFP if the optional renewal options are not exercised.

Question 8: Timing of the Governance RFP: Has IOLA considered sequencing the selection of the governance body until after the remaining Justice Infrastructure Project awardees have been identified, thereby allowing those participating organizations to help inform or participate in the establishment of the Governance Structure that will be responsible for working with them? If not, what factors informed the decision to issue this RFP in advance of selecting the project entities and will the Training Center grantee, if not conflicted out, be permitted to participate in the selection of the Governance Structure awardee?

Answer: IOLA's Board of Trustee's, at its discretion and upon recommendations from IOLA's Enhanced Information and Referral consulting groups, established funding priorities for FY27, which included the development of an inclusive, collaborative Governance Structure for its Justice Infrastructure Project. Governance was included in FY27 to: assist with any change management that may result from Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives; aid in the adoption of tools created from Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives; and to create mechanisms for sustained input and community oversight of the Justice Infrastructure Project.

An organization selected to lead another Justice Infrastructure Project component, such as the Training Center grantee, may be eligible to house or otherwise participate in the governance function, assuming the organization meets the IOLA Fund's eligibility criteria for grant recipients as described on page 4 of the RFP.

Eligibility does not guarantee funding.

Question 9: Coordination with Project Governance: How does IOLA anticipate the overarching governance body coordinating with any governance, advisory, or decision-making structures that may be established within the individual Justice Infrastructure Projects? What mechanisms are envisioned to avoid duplication of effort, overlapping responsibilities, or conflicting lines of accountability? Will governance move to a new entity if a new entity is awarded that contract?

Answer: IOLA anticipates that each individual Justice Infrastructure Project initiative will manage and oversee the development, sustainability, and maintenance of its individual initiative. IOLA anticipates that all organizations leading the individual Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives, including the overarching Governance body, will coordinate to ensure there is no duplication of effort, overlapping responsibilities, or conflicting lines of accountability.

IOLA and its Justice Infrastructure Project Manager anticipate facilitating this coordination through quarterly check-in calls with the leads of all individual Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives. These calls may serve as an opportunity for the overarching Governance body to ensure all initiatives are aligned and that there is no duplication of effort, overlapping responsibilities, or conflicting lines of accountability.

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Question 10: How will IOLA ensure that there is no duplication of effort between governance structures in each of the projects and the overarching governance body?

Answer: IOLA anticipates that each individual Justice Infrastructure Project initiative will manage and oversee its individual development,

sustainability, and maintenance. IOLA anticipates that all organizations leading the individual Justice Infrastructure Project initiatives, including the overarching Governance body, will coordinate to ensure there is no duplication of effort, overlapping responsibilities, or conflicting lines of accountability.

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Question 11: How will you ensure that there is no conflict of interest between the individual JIP projects and the overarching governance body?

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Question 12: Is it possible that an application can be successful but the grant award can be less than the “ask”? Or does IOLA simply say ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ to our request?

Answer: Yes. The IOLA Fund plans to award one Simplified Renewal Agreement which includes a one-year initial period for up to \$250,000. The IOLA Fund's Board of Trustees considers a number of factors in setting award amounts.

Question 13: An applicant is a 100% volunteer nonprofit organization that does not have payroll. They have inquired to their insurance carrier for General Liability, and they do not provide Professional Insurance to nonprofits, only a "Business Owners Policy." They are applying for the grant as they have a division of volunteer attorneys and paralegals. They have a General Liability policy as well as E&O (Errors and Omissions) Insurance. Will this suffice? Or would a Business Owners Policy (if different than General Liability), suffice?

Answer: Applicants must submit documentation of their current professional liability insurance (e.g. malpractice coverage) as part of their application per IOLA's regulations under 21 NYCRR § 7000.15(c). General Liability Insurance, Directors and Officers Policy, or Business Owners Policy is not the equivalent of professional liability coverage.