

9 November 2009

The Access to Justice Foundation
SMALL GRANTS FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Access to Justice Foundation today announced the results of its inaugural grants round, in which just over £25,000 was distributed across England and Wales to organisations providing free legal help to those in need. The funds distributed by the Foundation were received from several “pro bono costs orders” and from donations received from the legal profession.

The Foundation issued an invitation for small grant applications on 21 September 2009, accepting applications from local, regional and national organisations. In addition to being published on the Foundation’s website, the invitation was distributed to potential applicant organisations by Regional Legal Support Trusts, national organisations and key legal contacts.

Applications were accepted in accordance with the Foundation’s published Distribution Principles. The grant invitation stated that that preference would be given to strategic developments or smaller capacity building elements, though all types of funding needs would be considered. Examples (for illustration only) included:

- IT or other equipment that increases an organisation’s capacity to undertake casework.
- Help with feasibility or research work on a strategic issue covering a wider than local area.
- Help with staff training or organisational development that increases effectiveness or enhances cooperation.

26 applications were received by the closing deadline and were reviewed firstly by a Grants Committee and then by a dedicated meeting of the Board of Trustees chaired by Lord Goldsmith QC.

Small grants were awarded to 14 organisations across England and Wales, ranging from small local projects through to regional collaborations and national organisations, and in amounts from £500 to £3,500.

SMALL GRANTS AWARDED

Asylum Support Appeals Project (*local organisation*)

A grant towards the cost of essential telephone interpretation with clients.

Birmingham Law Centre (*local organisation*)

A grant towards the cost of consultancy to review monitoring and costing systems.

Bournemouth & Poole Pro Bono (*local organisation*)

A grant towards the cost of moving the group’s pro bono website, through which all local pro bono requests are made.

Carmarthen Citizens Advice Bureau, Wales *(local organisation)*

A grant towards a Training Administration post to strengthen their existing service.

Devon Law Centre, Plymouth *(local organisation)*

A grant to help with staff training costs.

Innocence Network UK *(national project based in Bristol)*

A grant towards a pilot project creating a Head of Casework and their 2010 national conference.

Gloucester Law Centre *(local organisation)*

A grant towards IT infrastructure.

Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit *(regional project)*

A grant towards a project that will support the co-ordination of immigration advice in Greater Manchester.

Law Centres Federation *(national project based in London)*

A grant towards the LCF Young People's Project.

LawWorks, The Solicitors Pro Bono Group *(national project based in London)*

A grant providing the final element of a matched funding deal to enable a website upgrade.

South West London Law Centre *(regional / national project)*

A grant towards a restructuring project aimed at addressing the root causes of law centres' financial causes, the results/best practice of which will be shared nationally.

St. Hilda's East Community Centre, London *(local organisation)*

A grant towards a Bi-Lingual Triage Receptionist at the Centre's legal advice sites.

Streetwise Community Law Centre, London *(local organisation)*

A grant towards IT infrastructure.

Trafford Law Centre, Manchester *(local organisation)*

A grant towards updating IT systems.