Legal Services National Technology Assistance Project

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2018 Call for Georgetown Iron Tech Lawyer App Proposals

Georgetown's Iron Tech Lawyer Program invites legal aid providers, courts, civil rights organizations, and other public interest organizations to submit proposals to collaborate with Georgetown's Technology, Innovation and Access to Justice class to create apps designed to increase meaningful access to the legal system.

The Georgetown Iron Tech Lawyer Program

In the spring semester of the 2018-19 academic year, Tanina Rostain, Professor of Law and Co-Director of the Justice Lab at Georgetown Law Center, Mark O'Brien, Executive Director of Pro Bono Net, and Kevin Mulcahy, Director of Education at Neota Logic, are co-teaching a practicum class at Georgetown Law Center, in which students collaborate with organizations to build web-based apps that increase access to justice.

In earlier years, students have built three types of apps:

- Apps that provide self-help tools (see e.g. the Paid Sick Time App. built with a Better Balance, N.Y.C.);
- Apps that support non-lawyer service providers or volunteers (see, e.g., DEN , built with the Jewish Association Serving the Aging, which provides legal information and resources to social workers serving the home bound elderly. This app was used more than 5,000 times before being expanded and renamed the Legal Risk Detector. Scroll down and click on the link at the bottom of the page to run the app.); and
- Triage, eligibility, and assessment apps. (see the VLAS Eligibility app, built with Virginia Legal Aid Society. This app has been used nearly 10,000 times to assist VLAS to screen potential clients.)

For apps from previous years, you can go to the IronTechLawyer page.

Up to six apps will be chosen for the class. Participating organizations are not charged a fee. (For technical information and participation parameters, see the Appendix.)   Theme

In July 2015, the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators unanimously passed Resolution 5, Reaffirming the Commitment to Meaningful Access to Justice for All, that "envisions state systems in which everyone has access to effective assistance for their essential civil legal needs through a comprehensive approach that provides a continuum of meaningful and appropriate services."   The aspiration is "a door for everyone" – one hundred percent access – and "no wrong door" – every potential entry to the legal system leads through an integrated network of services to an endpoint that provides meaningful access.

Drawing on Resolution 5, we seek proposals for apps that:

Complement or contribute to an organization's current service delivery model by: • Increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization's services; • Providing legal information in an accessible form for people that the organization is unable to serve for reasons of eligibility, capacity, or for other reasons; • Increasing the organization's capacity to coordinate with other legal and nonlegal service providers.

Contribute to enhancing or integrating the local legal services ecosystem by:

- Furthering the goal of creating a network among legal and non-legal service providers and other community organizations;
- Strengthening referral processes among direct legal service providers, civil rights organizations, specialized legal service providers, non-legal service providers (including social service and human service providers), volunteer organizations, or community organizations;
- Enhancing non-legal service providers or volunteers' capacity to provide legal information;
- Filling other justice gaps in the local legal services ecosystem.

Proposal Requirements

 *Project Description:*A proposal should describe: 1) the organization submitting the proposal, 2) the nature and need that the app is intended to address, 3) the apps' intended users, and 4) how the app fits within the organization's service delivery model or the larger access to justice ecosystem.

Subject Matter Expert: Every proposal should identify one or more subject matter experts who will be available work with the student team assigned to the app. (Typically, SME's devote approximately two hours a week to app development or less. SME's are not required to have any technical expertise.)

Length: Proposals should not exceed 750 words in length.

Due Date: Proposals are due November 20th, 2018.

Selection Criteria: Proposals should address one or more of the goals described above.

Selected organizations will be notified by December 14th, 2018.

Proposals should be submitted by email to Professor Tanina Rostain at tr238@georgetown.edu and Mark O'Brien at mobrien@probono.net.

If you have questions about whether an idea for an app will work for the class, please contact Tanina Rostain at tr238@georgetown.edu or 202-662-9218. She will be happy to work with you to help you determine whether your project is suitable for the class define its scope.

Technical Information and Participation Parameters

The apps are built on a platform provided by Neota Logic, a commercial software company with a strong commitment to pro bono. The software, which does not require coding knowledge, allows system designers to build legal artificial intelligence systems that can perform multiple functions, including branching logic, mathematical formulas, and weighing tests. The platform also provides for the automated production of documents and data collection. The company provides the software for use in the class under an educational license.

Organizations can be located anywhere in the United States. We will also consider proposals from Canada, the United Kingdom and any other country where a primary language is English. (Student teams typically work with organizations remotely.)

The spring semester runs from mid-January to the third week in April. Some apps are ready for launch at the end of the semester. In other instances, a participating organization will want to make further changes or add functions to the app, in which case the program will make its best effort to make available research assistants to work on the apps. The pace of this work will depend on the availability of RA's who have taken the course.

There is no commitment beyond the semester. If an organization chooses to launch its app after the app is finished, Neota Logic will provide free hosting of the app on its server for two years, after which it will charge a hosting fee of $250 a month for up to 1000 uses a week.