

IOLA Fund of the State of New York

Request for Information (RFI)

State Support for Civil Legal Services: Training Center

Issued: July 14, 2025

Responses Due: August 20, 2025

Introduction

The IOLA Fund of the State of New York's (IOLA) mission is to support those qualified non-profit organizations throughout New York State that will most efficiently and effectively provide stable, economical and high quality civil legal representation to eligible clients and will improve the administration of justice.

IOLA generates revenues through interest earned on New York lawyers' IOLA trust accounts. IOLA was established by the Legislature in 1983 and is administered by a fifteen-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor. The Trustees are assisted by a small staff of full-time employees located in New York City. The names of Trustees and staff and other information about IOLA may be found at www.iola.org.

In December 2023, IOLA launched the [Justice Infrastructure Project](#) ("Project"). Consistent with IOLA's mission, this Project seeks to ensure that every New Yorker with a legal problem has clear and timely access to high quality legal information, advice, and representation. To achieve this goal, [the Project will consist of two functions](#): Support, Knowledge, and Information for Legal Services Organizations (Function A) and Legal Information and Referral for the Public (Function B).

In the past 18 months, IOLA has worked with New York legal services organizations, community-based organizations, national experts, consultants and other stakeholders to further develop key considerations for Function A. This included a [convening](#) of providers and the development of Consulting Groups comprised of grantee providers that each met monthly to develop preliminary recommendations for IOLA's consideration.

Based on these preliminary recommendations, **IOLA seeks to develop a Training Center** for legal services providers throughout New York State.

Community to be Served

IOLA expects that the Training Center will be accessible to the employees and volunteers of nonprofit providers of civil legal services throughout New York State. To see the geographic distribution of IOLA grantees, please visit <https://iola.org/grantees/about-iola-grantees>.

The IOLA grantee network currently includes **87** nonprofit organizations. For the year ending March 31, 2025, the employee and volunteer composition is as follows:

| Total Employees: 5,713 | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Attorneys | 3,008 |
| Paralegals | 1,341 |
| Management or Administrative Staff | 1,364 |
| Total Volunteers: 45,088 | |
| Pro Bono Attorneys | 38,982 (22,847 active) |
| Law Students | 3,289 |
| Other Volunteers | 2,817 |

Purpose & Objectives

This Request for Information (“RFI”) seeks to acquire information regarding the potential for a nonprofit vendor to collaboratively develop, provide and maintain various forms of legal, professional, technical and other training, using assorted formats and technology, to civil legal services organizations throughout New York State. It is anticipated, but not guaranteed, that IOLA will use the information received from this RFI to develop a future procurement for the development and operation of the Training Center.

The objectives of this RFI are to: (1) develop a general understanding of the current state of vendor capabilities to provide scalable in-person and virtual professional trainings to the staff and volunteers of legal services providers throughout New York State; (2) obtain vendor feedback regarding the structure, governance, and financial requirements of a statewide Training Center; and (3) solicit vendors’ perspectives on the future direction of a statewide Training Center for the civil legal services community.

We invite organizations to share insights, solutions, technologies, and strategies that align with IOLA’s vision of providing statewide training services to civil legal service nonprofits.

There will not be a contract award directly resulting from this RFI. Respondents to the RFI will receive any announcement of any subsequent Request for Proposals (RFP) that may arise from the RFI. Any decision to issue an RFP for such services subsequent to the RFI will be at the sole discretion of IOLA, and IOLA is under no obligation to initiate such an RFP.

Important Notes

1. IOLA reserves the right to use any and all ideas submitted in response to the RFI.
2. IOLA reserves the right to request RFI respondents to provide supplemental information clarifying their responses.
3. IOLA reserves the right to modify or cancel this RFI in part or its entirety at any time.
4. IOLA recognizes that cost information provided in response to this RFI is nonbinding.
5. This RFI is being issued for data gathering purposes only. No contract can or will be awarded based on submissions.
6. Respondents are encouraged to respond to this RFI, however, failure to submit a response will not impact a respondent’s ability to respond to any future competitive solicitation process (if any).
7. There are no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in the RFI. Respondents are responsible for making their own evaluation of information and data contained in this RFI and for preparing and submitting responses to this RFI.
8. If any of the information in the vendor responses is considered confidential, proprietary, and/or a trade secret, it must be clearly indicated on the appropriate page of the vendor response. Release of such materials is governed by the New York State Freedom of Information Law (NY Public Officers Law §§ 84-90) (FOIL), which in pertinent part requires the bidder to provide specific justification as to why disclosure of particular information in the response would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of the vendor.

Requested Information

Please address the following.

1. Organization Information

Introduce your organization, including its structure, number of employees, geographic location(s) and annual budget. Provide contact name(s) and information in the event IOLA has questions regarding your organization's response to this RFI.

Please list and describe examples of your experience developing and / or providing training services to New York State civil legal services nonprofits. Identify and describe any challenges your organization has had in providing these services. Identify any organizations you have partnered with on training services and describe the partnership(s).

2. Project Information

Describe how your organization would develop and deliver statewide training services to nonprofit civil legal services organizations throughout New York State. When crafting your response, please answer the following:

Program:

2.1. What types of training services (legal education, professional, technical, etc.) is your organization prepared to develop and deliver? Would you recommend outsourcing any types of training?

2.2. How will you choose the topics that require training?

2.2. Are there best practices and/or techniques your organization follows in developing and delivering high-quality legal, professional, technical, or other trainings?

2.3. What types of tools or technology solutions would your organization employ in the development and delivery of training services?

2.4. How would your project balance in-person and online training services?

2.5. What recommendations do you have to coordinate and integrate existing trainings services or resources into your model? Are there collaborations with other training providers that you believe would be helpful? If so, how would you manage these partnerships?

2.6. Describe your expectation for the staff (i.e., number, location, type) required to develop, deploy and sustain a statewide training center.

2.7. What resources are required to update and maintain training materials, recordings, etc. when there are substantive updates to the trainings (law, practice, etc.)

2.8. What resources are required to store training materials? Would stored training materials be available to the community?

2.9. In what way could advancements in technology (e.g., AI) be used to enhance the development or delivery of training services?

Community:

- 2.10. What should the role of the New York State legal services community be in developing and/or participating in the delivery of training services?
- 2.11. What strategies would you employ to ensure regional differences throughout New York State are taken into account while creating and implementing the training services?
- 2.12. What strategies would you employ to ensure buy-in from the New York State civil legal services community?
- 2.13. How will you ensure the New York State legal services community is able to participate in and inform the development of training?

Quality Assurance and Progress Tracking:

- 2.14. What mechanisms would you employ to ensure quality in all aspects of the administration of and ongoing support for the training services?
- 2.15. What strategies would you recommend for ensuring that technology solutions used to deliver and support online or in-person education comply with state and federal accessibility requirements, including recent updates to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, in order to ensure access for all trainees?
- 2.16. What mechanisms would you employ to track post-completion outcomes and feedback, including trainee comprehension, satisfaction and recommendations?
- 2.17. What approaches do you suggest for tracking project milestones and progress?, What types of reporting structures do you recommend for a contract resulting from a procurement of statewide training services for civil legal services nonprofits?

3. *Pricing Information*

- 3.1. What pricing models (grant supported, fee for service, etc.) do you recommend for a project of this scope?
- 3.2 What information would your organization need to see in a potential solicitation to help your organization effectively provide a comprehensive project budget?
- 3.3. What are your anticipated start-up costs for a statewide training center?
- 3.4. Detail annual operating costs for a statewide training center (personnel and costs other than personnel).

4. *Additional Information*

Respondents may submit any materials that they believe may be of interest or use to IOLA, whether existing or specifically prepared for this RFI. Respondents are encouraged to provide other pertinent information and ideas beyond what is specifically requested.

RFI Questions and Response Submission

RFI Questions

All questions and clarifications concerning this RFI shall be addressed to IOLA's Deputy Director of Programs, Colleen Finan Fehringer. Questions should be submitted via email to IOLAGrants@iola.org. Official answers to questions will be posted on the IOLA website: www.iola.org. Questions are due to IOLA by August 13, 2025.

RFI Response Format

Responses must be submitted via email to IOLAGrants@iola.org by August 20, 2025, with the subject line "RFI Response [insert name of organization]". All materials shall be attached, clearly labeled, and sent via email in a manner to allow for ease of reviewing responses.