



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Consultant Services for AI-Powered Statewide Knowledge Base Project – Phase 1

Issued By:

Michigan Statewide Advocacy Services (MSAS)

RFP Issue Date

June 24, 2026

Proposal Submission Deadline

July 24, 2026

Introduction & Project Background

Michigan Statewide Advocacy Services (MSAS) seeks proposals from qualified consultants to assist in the planning, conceptualization, and design of a statewide AI-powered knowledge base for Michigan’s legal aid community.

Michigan legal aid organizations currently rely on multiple sources of legal knowledge, including internal organizational resources, some limited centralized resources used at different rates and in different ways by various programs and other practice-specific materials maintained by individual legal aid programs. While these resources are valuable, they are maintained across multiple systems and organizations, which results in duplicated efforts, and makes it difficult for advocates to easily and consistently locate accurate and up-to-date information.

MSAS is exploring the development of a statewide knowledge base that would serve as a centralized source of legal information, practice resources, templates, and expertise for Michigan legal aid attorneys and other poverty advocates. The knowledge base is expected to leverage emerging AI capabilities to improve access to information and support more efficient delivery of legal services.

This RFP is for **Phase 1** of the project. The selected consultant will work with MSAS and key stakeholders to assess needs, develop a conceptual design, and provide recommendations for implementation. Phase 1 will not include technology procurement or implementation.

The project will be supervised by **Lorray Brown, Executive Director of MSAS**, who will work directly with the consultant and engage relevant stakeholders throughout the project.

Organizational Background

Michigan Statewide Advocacy Services (MSAS) is a nonprofit organization that provides statewide legal services, advocacy, and support through programs serving low-income individuals, immigrant communities, older adults, and Michigan's legal aid community. MSAS' statewide programs are Michigan Poverty Law Program (MPLP), Michigan Legal Help (MLH), Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (MIRC), and Michigan Elder Justice Initiative (MEJI).

MSAS, through its statewide programs, works closely with legal aid organizations and statewide partners to improve access to justice and strengthen the delivery of legal services throughout Michigan.

Project Objectives

The objectives of Phase 1 are to:

- Assess the knowledge management needs of Michigan legal aid organizations.
- Identify opportunities to improve access to legal information and resources.
- Develop a conceptual design for a statewide AI-powered knowledge base.
- Recommend governance, sustainability, and implementation approaches.
- Produce a roadmap and recommendations for Phase 2 implementation.

Target Users

The statewide knowledge base is intended to serve legal aid attorneys, and other poverty advocates throughout Michigan. Users will represent a range of experience levels, practice areas, and organizations across Michigan's legal aid network. Users may draw on the knowledge base to support a wide range of services, including online legal information, advice and brief services, full representation, and broader advocacy efforts.

Scope of Services

The consultant will work collaboratively with MSAS and key stakeholders, including Michigan legal aid organizations and statewide partners.

- **Discovery & Stakeholder Engagement**
 - Conduct stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys, or other engagement activities as appropriate.
 - Consult with MSAS, Michigan Poverty Law Program (MPLP), Michigan Legal Help (MLH), the Counsel and Advocacy Law Line (CALL), the Legal Services Association of Michigan (LSAM), and other legal aid organizations.
 - Assess current knowledge management practices, resources, challenges, and opportunities.
- **Assessment & Design**
 - Review existing knowledge resources and identify gaps, needs, and opportunities.
 - Develop a conceptual design and framework for a statewide knowledge base.

- Consider content organization, governance, maintenance, accessibility, and user experience.
- Identify opportunities for AI-assisted search, retrieval, and knowledge management.

The consultant is not expected to select, procure, or implement a specific technology platform during Phase 1. The focus of this phase is discovery, planning, concept development, and recommendations to inform future implementation.

- **Recommendations & Roadmap**

- Develop recommendations regarding implementation considerations, sustainability, and future technology needs.
- Develop a proposed roadmap for Phase 2 implementation, including timeline, budget considerations, and key requirements.

Deliverables

The consultant will provide:

- Discovery and Needs Assessment Findings
- Final Written Report
- Final Presentation

The final written report should include the Phase 1 findings, the proposed concept and design for the statewide knowledge base, and a recommended roadmap for Phase 2 implementation, including timeline and budget considerations.

Project Timeline

MSAS anticipates selecting a consultant in August 2026, with project work beginning shortly thereafter.

The consultant's final report, including recommendations, concept and design, and proposed Phase 2 implementation roadmap, must be completed and submitted no later than **January 31, 2027**.

Respondents should provide a detailed project timeline as part of their proposal, including key activities, milestones, stakeholder engagement opportunities, draft deliverables, and anticipated completion dates for each phase of work.

Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposals should include:

- **Executive Summary:** Brief overview of the consultant's understanding of the project and proposed approach.
- **Qualifications and Experience:** Description of relevant experience and similar projects.

- **Proposed Approach:** Overview of the proposed methodology and stakeholder engagement process.
- **Project Timeline:** Proposed timeline, milestones, and deliverables through completion of Phase 1.
- **Cost Proposal:** Detailed project cost and fee structure, including:
 - Total project cost
 - Proposed fee structure
 - Estimated hours by task, if applicable
 - Any anticipated expenses
 - Assumptions or exclusions
- **References:** At least three references from similar projects.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Relevant experience and qualifications
- Proposed methodology and approach
- Cost and budget alignment
- Timeline and availability
- References and past performance

MSAS may request interviews, presentations, or additional information from selected respondents as part of the evaluation process.

Submission Instructions

Proposals should be submitted electronically with the subject line:

Proposal – AI-Powered Statewide Knowledge Base Project Phase 1

Proposals must be received no later than **July 24, 2026**.

- **Submit proposals to:**
 - Jennifer Visel, Director of Development and Communications (MAP)
jvisel@miadvocacy.org

Questions

Questions regarding this RFP may be submitted electronically to:

- Jennifer Visel, Director of Development and Communications (MAP)
jvisel@miadvocacy.org

Reservation of Rights

MSAS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive technicalities or irregularities, request additional information, negotiate with respondents, or cancel this solicitation if it is determined to be in the best interest of the organization.

MSAS will not reimburse respondents for any costs incurred in preparing or submitting proposals in response to this RFP.