

The Legal Clinic Fund

Program Guidelines

About the Fund

The Legal Clinic Fund is a collaborative fund to support the growth and sustainability of legal clinics based at universities across the United States that seek to advance and defend first amendment rights, media freedom, and transparency in their communities and nationally. The Fund will provide grants to support the clinics' growth, collaboration, capacity building, and experimentation. This Fund will be a catalyst for the growth and sustainability of existing clinics and centers and will provide newsrooms and journalists with increased legal resources and representation for those who are least likely to receive it from traditional sources. Ultimately, the Fund seeks to ensure that any newsroom or journalists who needs legal support can access it.

The Fund is generously supported by [Democracy Fund](#), [Heising-Simons Foundation](#), and [The Klarman Family Foundation](#). [The Miami Foundation](#) serves as fiscal sponsor for the Fund. Click here to learn more about the Fund.

Focus Areas

The Fund will provide financial support to First Amendment and media serving legal clinics affiliated with accredited law schools. The Fund will administer grants in three broad areas: capacity building and infrastructure, collaboration, and experimentation.

1. **Capacity building and infrastructure:** The Fund seeks to invest in capacity building efforts including, but not limited to, the funding of fellows, litigation costs, administrative support, programmatic support and/or expansion, etc. that will enable legal clinics to serve more journalists and expand their impact.
2. **Collaboration and resource sharing:** The Fund seeks to support partnerships between two or more clinics tackling joint projects, cases, or tasks that leverage the diverse skills or scale of the network as well as projects that create shared resources that make clinics more efficient or impactful.
3. **Experimentation:** The fund wants to support forward looking, exploratory and experimental projects that could have profound impact on the field, or establish important new ideas.

Values

1. **Independence** – It is of paramount importance that any legal clinic receiving funding from the fund remain independent. As such, the fund will not seek to influence decisions regarding the cases these clinics take on.
2. **Community** – The fund will prioritize organizations that are working in service of local communities and publishers, and helping address local, regional and state issues. We expect that many clinics will also work on national level cases, but want to encourage accessibility to the issues local journalists encounter. We also recognize that local cases can set important precedents that are critical to national debates later.
3. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** – The fund will give special consideration to how legal clinics can help support a new generation of diverse First Amendment scholars and practitioners. If we are to defend the First Amendment as a right embraced by all, we must work to ensure the field of First Amendment lawyers is inclusive as well.
4. **Collaboration** – Throughout history, advances in First Amendment law have often come through solidarity across publishers. The need for partnership is even greater now, and as such the fund is

biased towards collaboration. We believe that these legal clinics will be stronger and more successful if they can develop strong relationships rooted in collaboration and partnership.

5. **Sustainability** – The Fund values clinics seeking to build a long-term resource, not a short term infusion of capital for a temporary spike in activity.

Eligibility

Legal clinics affiliated with accredited law schools are eligible to apply. The fund will not provide seed funding for new clinics or grants to unfunded proposed clinics. The fund will consider proposals from clinics already planning to launch in the 2019 academic year with other funding. Preference will be given to clinics able to demonstrate a commitment to service of, or partnership with, newsrooms and journalists.

Clinics that submit joint proposals are still eligible to submit separate proposals in other focus areas.

Grant Size + Duration

Grant amounts will vary, depending on proposed activities and the organization's capacity. Grant awards for small organizations will likely range from \$50,000 - \$150,000 annually. Grant awards for large organizations will likely range from \$75,000 - \$200,000 annually. Grant awards in the collaboration and resource sharing category will not exceed \$15,000 as they are focused on helping provide small funding to support collaborations.

Grant durations will also vary but we expect many grants will support multi-year projects. As part of the application process applicants will be able to express interest in being considered for multi-year funding.

Please note there is a 10% limit on university overhead that may be charged to grant awards.

Application Process + Timeline

Eligible applicants must submit a proposal online via Submittable – <https://themiamifoundation.submittable.com>. Each organization may submit one proposal with the exception of those also submitting a joint collaborative proposal. A representative from the fund will reach out to finalists to organize a site visit, or video call, with clinic leadership and a law school administrator.

RFP released: Tuesday, May 7, 2019

Proposals due: Friday, June 7, 2019 at 12:00 pm EST

Site Visits: July 1, 2019 - July 19, 2019

Estimated notification of grant awards: Late July 2019

Estimated grant period: August 1, 2019 – July 31, 2020

Information Session + Office Hours

Interested applicants are invited to attend an Information Session to learn more about the Legal Clinic Fund. If an applicant has specific questions related to their application or eligibility please register for Office Hours:

[Information Session](#) (Webinar): Wednesday, May 15, 2019 1:00 – 2:00 pm EST

[Office Hours](#) (Phone): Monday, May 20, 2019 2:30 – 3:30 pm EST

[Office Hours](#) (Phone): Tuesday, May 21, 2019 12:30 – 1:30 pm EST

Questions

Please contact the Fund Administrator, Lindsey Linzer, Senior Director of Programs and Grants Administration, The Miami Foundation at LLinzer@miamifoundation.org.

The Legal Clinic Fund Grant Application

Applications can be submitted here: <https://themiamifoundation.submittable.com>

Contact Information

1. Legal Clinic Name
2. Legal Clinic Address
3. University Name
4. University Address
5. Primary Contact Name
6. Primary Contact Title
7. Primary Contact Email
8. Primary Contact Phone
9. Signatory Contact Name
10. Signatory Contact Title
11. Signatory Contact Email
12. Legal Clinic Website
13. Legal Clinic 2019 Budget

Proposal

1. Clinic Purpose

Describe the mission of the clinic, what kind of work you do and why. Summarize the overall goals of your work and key projects that help you meet those goals.

2. Cases

How many cases and other active matters did the clinic take on in 2017-2018? 2018-2019?

3. Audience

Who does your organization serve on campus and in your community and what is the unmet need you plan to address? In what ways do you reach that audience, or plan to reach? What steps have you taken to listen to your community and assess their legal and support needs?

4. Activities

What programs and/or capacities will this grant support? How will those activities help you meet your mission, expand freedom of information in your region, and/or strengthen access to legal support for journalists and newsrooms in your region?

5. Capacity

Where is the most important area of growth that could help you expand and strengthen the services you provide and the work you do? (Examples might include additional staff, communications support, fundraising capacity, and others)

6. Impact

What changes will you see in your work, your stakeholders, and your organization as a result of this grant? What will be the outcomes of the work this grant enables and how will you track and measure your progress?

7. Measurement

How do you currently track the impact of your work, and how would track and measure your progress toward your desired goals for work funded through this grant?

8. Amount Requested

How much funding are you requesting?

9. Duration

Grants will have two or three year durations. Will the amount requested support this project for two year or three years? Please explain.

10. Students

What is your student recruitment process? How many students do you accept each semester? If you're a year-long clinic, how many students do you accept annually? How many students have you had go on to work in media law, transparency, or first amendment issues?

11. Staff

Please list the name, position, and 1-2 sentence background for each individual, including any fellows.

12. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- a. What forms of diversity (e.g., gender, racial, ideological, cultural, religious, immigrant/refugee background, linguistic, generational, etc.) do you think are important for strengthening the quality of the work proposed and why? How do you propose to draw upon diverse perspectives in the community or field that the proposed work will serve?
- b. Does the staff of your project, organization and board/governing body reflect this diversity? Is this diversity present in leadership positions as well as in more junior ones?
- c. What challenges does your organization face in building the diversity described above, what strategies has your organization used and what progress has been made in increasing its diversity in the last two or three years? What strategies will your organization use to achieve diversity in the future?

13. University Relationship

In what ways does the university support your work? Describe what kinds of support you currently receive from your university (salaries, space and equipment, alumni outreach, etc).

14. Network Membership

Is your clinic a member of the National Access Free Expression and Accountability Network?

Required Attachments

1. Project Budget (budget for requested dollars). Note, there is a 10% limit on university overhead.
2. Current Year Organization Budget with Revenues and Expenses
3. Board of Directors List (ideally for both the clinic and the University)
4. Audited Financials
5. Active Matters (docket and/or brief description of active matters for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019)