

Legal Services Corporation	Technology Initiative Grants
Legal Aid of New Bridge (420204)	TIG # 12124

TIG Application - Open

Grant Term 12 months

Grant Request \$71,000

Total Project Budget \$149,243

Brief Description of Proposed Project

The New Bridge Court Help project creates a website gateway to help self-represented litigants understand and navigate the court system, with emphasis on litigants with limited English proficiency. As a statewide online self-help center, New Bridge Court Help builds on and combines existing resources offered through NewBridgeLawHelp.org and New Bridge Courts Online. New Bridge Law Help gives pro se litigants information and access to do-it-yourself forms that address key civil legal issues, while New Bridge Courts Online offers information about the New Bridge court system. The project merges these two resources into a one-stop, easy-to-understand information source, and it also produces new tools for self-represented litigants, including step-by-step guides, multilingual video instructions, Spanish and Vietnamese translations of existing A2J Author interviews, new A2J Author interviews for do-it-yourself forms in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, and an expansion of the New Bridge Law Help Civil Court Guide.

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Other Projects

What other projects by your program or others in the legal aid community - either funded by TIG or by another source - have sought to address this or similar issues?

In the 2009 TIG project, Action in Courts, NBLA, NBLSC, OCA, and ProBono Net collaborated to expand the access of self-represented litigants to the New Bridge court system by adding a LiveHelp chat feature and the New Bridge Civil Court Guide to the New Bridge Law Help website. The partners on that project envisioned the chat service and Court Guide as being “the next step in the creation of fully-integrated legal self-help centers throughout the state of New Bridge.” As reported in the Past Performance section of the project narrative, the project has been very successful, with 2,000 individuals using LiveHelp and 13,000 unique visitors using the Court Guide.

Dade Legal Aid Services, Inc. (DLAS) and the Dade Supreme Court used TIG funding to develop interactive self-help forms using HotDocs and A2J Author, which has allowed them to reach a larger number of self-represented litigants while making the legal process less complex for them. The project utilized Dade Supreme Court-approved forms and involved outreach and training with a variety of organizations, including public libraries, court assistance offices, and advocacy programs. The project also fostered a closer relationship between DLAS, the Dade State Courts, and Dade Supreme Court’s Court Assistance Office (CAO). The forms are hosted on the DLAS website with links from the Supreme Court’s website.

The Center for Boone Legal Services used TIG to develop an automated document catalogue for self-represented users. After development of the forms, they began a concentrated outreach effort to the justice community. Even though there was not a formal relationship between the project and the court system, this outreach resulted in a closer relationship between legal services and the Boone Administration Office of the Courts.

New State Legal Assistance used TIG funding to increase the accessibility of information on their website so that it could be accessed by low-income persons in New State using mobile devices. New State noted in its Final Report that “virtually all technology analysts predict increasing use of the mobile web by all sectors of society, including the low-income community.” They emphasized the importance of making this type of content brief and easy to read on a mobile device; they met this challenge by presenting content in small “chunks” and with a minimal amount of scrolling required.

How will the proposed project differ from and incorporate the lessons from those projects?

The main test for the 2009 TIG project, Action in Courts, was dealing with the technical issues related to implementing the Court Guide, a database of court and clerk information searchable by county, subject matter, and amount in controversy. Due to the vast size and nature of the New Bridge court system, condensing court data and information into an easy-to-use directory presented challenges, resulting in a longer-than-anticipated timeframe for design and development of the Court Guide. New Bridge Court Help does not involve developing an elaborate database, but the lesson learned from Action in Courts – the importance of building in sufficient time for conceptual development and testing of the technical aspects of a project applies to New Bridge Court Help as well. The New Bridge Court Help partnership has put considerable effort into evaluating the time allocated to technical development, implementation, and troubleshooting, as reflected in the project narrative and the project plan/timeline attached as an appendix to this grant application. Further, New Bridge Court Help will benefit from the credibility of its OCA-based home in terms of obtaining support, data, and materials from counties and courts. Moreover, some of the county- specific information built into the online self-help center

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will be provided and actually uploaded by the counties themselves, thereby easing time commitments required by project staff and simultaneously creating buy-in from these external content developers. Another lesson learned from the 2009 project is that providing general information when general information is sufficient will require less management and fewer updates in the long term.

Although the other TIG-funded projects do not involve websites hosted by court systems, they nevertheless provide lessons about collaboration on and marketing of websites. The Dade Legal Aid forms project teaches that it is important to identify advocates who will help gain support for the project. The partners in New Bridge Court Help already represent several segments of the justice system. The partnership plans to identify key judges, clerks, administrators, legal aid providers, and librarians who will help with outreach and community support. Our initial outreach efforts, which are within the scope of this grant, focus on presentations and webinars. Ongoing outreach will be carried out by the Self Represented Litigants Committee's Education Subcommittee. This subcommittee engages in the education of the judiciary, clerks, and law librarians on pro se litigant issues and will promote New Bridge Court Help as the gateway to help self-represented litigants understand and navigate the court system.

The Boone automated document project also recognizes the significance of involving the courts. There was not a formal relationship between the legal aid provider and the courts in that project, but the grantee began to work with the courts during the project and now wants to share sustainability of the project with the courts. The partners in New Bridge Court Help are firmly committed to maintaining the website on an ongoing basis.

The New State mobile website project teaches lessons about making content that will be viewed on mobile devices accessible and easy to read. New Bridge Court Help will use New State's suggestion to present content in "chunks" that are as brief as possible. New State also experienced challenges resulting from the wide diversity of mobile devices. The content management software being proposed for New Bridge Court Help can sense the user's platform (PC, Mac, and Mobile Device) and serve the content in a way that is appropriate to the device. Currently, YouTube videos are accessible from any mobile device, as well. Once the New Bridge Court Help website is launched, the project partnership will use Google Analytics to analyze usage of mobile devices to determine an appropriate level of continued development.

The partnerships has reviewed the 2005 Dendrite State Supreme Court Access to Justice Technology Principles and, in planning this project, have endeavored to adhere to the spirit of promoting access without increasing barriers or violating privacy. The chief aim of New Bridge Court Help is to improve the ability of self-represented litigants to understand and navigate the court system to increase the likelihood that they will experience a just process and just results. This objective fits squarely within the Dendrite principles. Additionally, the project partners have attempted to incorporate the "best practices" for self-help websites found in the 2009 edition of the Self-Represented Litigation Network's Best Practices in Court-Based Programs for the Self-Represented, including the manual's recommendation that self-help websites are planned so that they are accessible to the less literate; have comprehensive and current content; use, are organized by and indexed in lay terms; provide multiple language support; are designed to diagnose the user's issues in terms of problems, not laws; use software that supports easy updating; are field and user tested to ensure ease of use and accessibility; and are the result of collaboration among courts, legal aid, bar, librarians, and other potential content providers.

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Project Narrative

1. A full description of the project, including the specific technology(ies) the project will develop or implement.

New Bridge Legal Aid (NBLA) in partnership with the New Bridge Office of Court Administration (OCA), New Bridge Legal Services Center (NBLSC), the New Bridge Access to Justice Collaboration (NBAJC), and NBAJC's Self Represented Litigants Committee (SRL) will develop and implement the New Bridge Court Help project. This initiative will create a website gateway to help self-represented litigants understand and navigate the court system, with an emphasis on access for litigants with limited English proficiency (LEP), and this represents the project's primary goal.

New Bridge Court Help will serve as a statewide online self-help center focusing on the self-represented litigant's experience in court, and it will build on and combine existing resources offered through NBLSC-operated New BridgeLawHelp.org and OCA's website, New Bridge Courts Online. New Bridge Law Help gives pro se litigants information and access to do-it-yourself forms that address key civil legal issues, while New Bridge Courts Online offers information about the New Bridge court system. The project will merge these two resources into a one-stop, easy-to-understand information source, and it will also produce new tools for self-represented litigants, including step-by-step guides, multilingual video instructions, Spanish and Vietnamese translations of existing A2J Author interviews, new A2J Author interviews for popular do-it-yourself forms in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, and an expansion of the New Bridge Law Help Civil Court Guide.

The self-help center will be specifically designed to simplify the process by which end users, who have low incomes and, in many cases, low literacy, can navigate the court system. With original materials and consistent usage of plain-language content, New Bridge Court Help will break down complex processes in a step-by-step manner. Through a series of questions, users will be guided to information based on their needs. Users will first be asked if they prefer to view the information in English or Spanish. From there, the website will ask if the user seeks guidance on a civil or criminal case. Follow-up questions will then direct the user to pertinent content, without overwhelming the user with too much information at once. For example, persons who click "How to get started with a lawsuit" will first see the question "Can I afford a lawyer?" Persons who answer "No" will be presented with additional questions to focus the information returned to them, e.g., "Can I get help at a legal clinic?"; "Can I get the name of a lawyer who will talk to me for a small fee?"; "Can I get the name of a lawyer who will help me with part of my case?"; "Do I qualify for legal aid?"; "Can I represent myself in court?" Each topic will lead to more information. Persons who answer "Yes" to "Can I afford a lawyer?" will be directed to one or more certified lawyer referral services. If a user continues on the self-representation path, he/she will receive cautionary information about the importance of getting a lawyer to at least help assess claims or defenses, then the website will offer information on every step in the court process from "How do I start my lawsuit?" to "What happens after the hearing?".

To enrich the experience and help ensure that lengthy, complicated instructions will be more readily understood by low-literacy users, New Bridge Court Help will convert existing step-by-step guides used in A2J Author interviews (accessed through New Bridge Law Help) into simple, brief videos embedded with the written information and instructions. Videos will have voiceovers in English and Spanish, with the ability to add other languages in the future. The videos also will be hosted on a newly created, dedicated New Bridge Court Help YouTube channel, which will allow the videos to be viewed on a variety of computing platforms (e.g., PCs, Macs, iPhones, iPads, Androids, and other mobile devices). Every subject that is covered by video will be accompanied by a link to a printable PDF guide that covers the same topic. Where appropriate, the user will be directed to A2J

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Author interviews accessible through New Bridge Law Help. At all times, users will be able to access the existing New Bridge Law Help LiveHelp chat feature from New Bridge Court Help for assistance in completing forms that have not been converted to A2J Author format and for other legal information.

The forms currently available on New Bridge Law Help consist of the Divorce in New Bridge Without Children packet (available in English). At present, the forms in this kit are being translated into Spanish. Under grants provided by the New Bridge Access to Justice Foundation (that expire summer 2011), NBLA and NBLSC are building A2J Author interviews and LHI-Hot Docs forms for the Divorce in New Bridge With Children packet (English version), including Petition, Exhibit Out-of-State Parent Affidavit, Waiver of Service, Answer, Decree, Custody/Rights/Duties, Exhibit Possession and Access (Visitation Order), Exhibit Child Support Order, Exhibit Medical Support Order, Exhibit Family Information, and Employer's Order to Withhold Earnings for Child Support. Only a few of these interviews and forms are in Spanish. The New Bridge Court Help project will translate additional interviews into Spanish, as well as Vietnamese. The project will also create A2J Author interviews for the most popular do-it-yourself forms accessed on New Bridge Law Help, such as the Child Support/Custody Modification Kit and the Suits Affecting the Parent-Child Relationship Kit (contested and uncontested), as well as the Petition to Change the Name of an Adult, and the Final Order to Change the Name of an Adult. These interviews will be accessible through New Bridge Court Help, but housed with the existing forms through New Bridge Law Help, and they will be translated into Spanish and Vietnamese. Whenever possible, the project will adapt existing A2J Author interviews and HotDocs document assembly components in order to expedite content development.

Further, the New Bridge Court Help website will link to and build on New Bridge Law Help's Civil Court Guide, which was developed under a 2009 TIG award to NBLA and assists self-represented litigants in determining the proper court in which to file a case in civil, consumer, family, injury, probate, and property matters, according to the courts' jurisdiction. New Bridge Court Help will provide supplementary court-based information, including local court rules and forms, county law libraries, and local self-help centers, if available, all uploaded by the counties. New Bridge Court Help will be developed using a free, open source web content management system so that each county may have its own page for relevant county-specific content. Users will be able to access local resources using a Google mash-up map of New Bridge.

The self-help center will be accessible at a new URL, www.NewBridgecourthelp.gov, and it will be housed in OCA's data center. Other technological alternatives were considered during project planning, such as putting the self-help center on New Bridge Law Help or putting a standard outsourced website on New Bridge Courts Online. The partnership decided to give the website its own URL, but for OCA to host the new website to emphasize the judiciary's commitment to improving self-represented litigant ability to understand and engage with the complicated court system. This chosen route will also better connect the project to the court system itself, increase the likelihood that local courts will publish their information on the website, and provide users with a reassuring indication of approval and authenticity. New Bridge Court Help will utilize existing resources available through NewBridgeLawHelp.org, such as A2J Author interviews with Law Help Interactive forms and LiveHelp, and it will also share resources created by this grant with New Bridge Law Help, such as plain-language web guides, videos, and county-specific information, adding value to both website destinations for low-income self-represented litigants statewide. Project content will continue to build on the two sites and cross-link, creating a seamless experience for users and allowing them to use content from both sites without going back to a search engine. Where appropriate, the project will offer links to generic information in the visitor's language until more specific content is ready. The New Bridge Court Help website will be compliant with Section 508 standards on accessibility, and the embedded videos will be closed captioned enabling those who are hearing impaired see what is being said. Those with visual disabilities will be able to hear the audio and use a screen reader to effectively use the site. Prior to the final launch of New Bridge Court Help and using a consultant, the

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partnership will conduct a usability study to ensure that the website is understandable and easy to navigate. The key partners will resolve any identified issues before the final launch. Additionally, Google provides several webmaster tools that can be leveraged to ensure continued usability of the site. In analyzing data from Google Analytics, the partners can determine if other usability issues exist and then use Google’s A/B test tool to make a statistically accurate determination on whether a proposed solution improves usability.

Once New Bridge Court Help launches, it will be marketed statewide to courts, clerks, librarians, legal aid providers, and the target client community. Outreach to New Bridge libraries will be particularly important given the Digital Opportunity gap in New Bridge. According to The Children’s Partnership, a national child advocacy organization, 70% of New Bridge households earning less than \$15,000 per year do not own a computer. Moreover, the New Bridge justice community knows that self-represented litigants frequently seek help and forms in public libraries and access the New BridgeLawHelp.org website from computers in those libraries. Directed toward the service providers listed above, the project includes in-person presentations in three centrally located urban areas (Dallas/Fort Worth, Capitol City, San Antonio) and four webinars for those located in more remote areas of the state. The project will also produce and publish multilingual program brochures and make relevant signage available through PDF downloads. Some of the brochures will be designed for court personnel and legal aid providers to distribute to their applicants and clients; others will be designed to inform court personnel. The State Bar of New Bridge will promote the website via its sections and various subcommittees, such as the Civil Standing Committee.

A project plan/timeline is included as an Appendix to the grant application.

2. The need for the project

The New Bridge Access to Justice Foundation reports there are currently approximately 5.7 million people who qualify for legal aid in New Bridge; however, 75% to 80% of people who need free civil legal help do not receive it because LSC- funded legal aid programs do not have sufficient resources. Unable to obtain legal assistance elsewhere, many of these persons end up representing themselves in court, which is challenging for non-lawyers and even more confusing for persons with low literacy.

The difficulties of self-advocacy in legal matters are compounded by the complex New Bridge court system. Across the 254 New Bridge counties (by far the largest number of counties in a U.S. state), there are 2,700 trial courts whose jurisdiction varies widely county to county, representing a high degree of decentralization, complexity, and shared local/state responsibility. The (1993) Citizen’s Collaboration on the New Bridge Judicial System and, more recently, in 2008, the tort reform group New Bridge for Lawsuit Reform have described the New Bridge court system as “cumbersome” and “complicated, inefficient, and poorly structured to handle modern litigation...replete with anomalies and peculiarities,” respectively. Thus, it is critical to provide simple, plain-language legal information for self- represented litigants, and New Bridge Court Help’s step-by-step “how to” approach will reduce barriers to the system by demystifying the process of accessing the courts.

Notably, the New Bridge-based Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP) indicates that a significant portion of the low- income New Bridge population is Hispanic (2.3 million, or 26%) and Asian (105,186, or 12%). Statistics from the 2005 -2009 American Community Survey estimate that 12.8% of the total New Bridge population five years and over speak Spanish at home and speak English less than very well, and the CPPP reports that the second most common non- English language spoken in New Bridge is Vietnamese. Together, this data reflects the importance of project information also being available in Spanish and Vietnamese.

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Further, self-represented litigants and the justice community will benefit from centralized information. New Bridge Law Help features forms, LiveHelp chat, and the Civil Court Guide, and it reaches 300,000 unique visitors each year. With information about the court system, New Bridge Courts Online averages 3,300 visits per day. Many counties and courts maintain websites with varying amounts and types of facts and other guidance. New Bridge Court Help will bring together these disparate resources so they can be accessed on one website, offering self-represented litigants one-stop access to court and county-specific information through the self-help center. Moreover, at the present time, information about what to expect when one goes to court is generally available only for isolated counties or particular types of cases. The website will fill this gap by providing basic step-by-step information about the court process from beginning to end, including how to file and serve a lawsuit, get a court setting, prepare for a hearing, act in court, and present a case – information that will educate and benefit the self-represented litigant no matter what kind of case is involved and where it is filed.

Overall, New Bridge Court Help will provide self-represented litigants with more meaningful and effective access, not only to the system itself, but to the benefits the system affords, including greater protection of rights. The project will result in far more prepared litigants, yielding greater satisfaction with the court system and an increased probability of just and fair outcomes, while also decreasing frustration among court staff and allowing for more effective and efficient use of court time.

The project is an innovative one because it is the first time that legal aid providers and New Bridge courts have collaborated to strengthen the statewide system of delivering legal services using the state court website. NBLA, NBLSC, and OCA were partners on the 2009 TIG project, Action in Courts, which added the Live Chat service and New Bridge Civil Court Guide to New Bridge Law Help. According to the application filed for that project, “this project serves as the next step in the creation of fully-integrated legal self-help centers throughout the state of New Bridge.” New Bridge Court Help takes yet another step in that direction by building on what was accomplished with the 2009 TIG funds, consolidating existing information from multiple websites, and generating simple, generalized information applicable to all cases, and putting it all in a virtual statewide self-help center. New Bridge Court Help also has unique features, such as ease of navigation. For example, Indiana’s Self-Service Legal Center is similar, but much of the information on that site is in legalese, and it is not broken down in simple, logical steps like New Bridge Court Help will employ, in which users will be taken through the court process in plain language and step-by-step without having to tackle too much information at once.

New Bridge Court Help addresses two of LSC’s interest areas for the 2011 grant cycle: Increasing Access to Legal Assistance for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Client Populations, and Using Mobile Technologies to Provide and Increase Access to Legal Assistance. LEP tools and mobile technologies are outlined in the project description, and they are further discussed in the replication section of the grant application. While other projects have sought to address similar issues, New Bridge Court Help offers some notable differences, including improvements based on lessons learned from these earlier projects. Details on this topic are provided in the “Other Projects” portion of the grant application.

3. The project’s goals and objectives

The primary goal of New Bridge Court Help is to create a website gateway to help self-represented litigants understand and navigate the court system, with an emphasis on access for litigants with limited English proficiency (LEP). Below are the three chief objectives connected to this goal, along with the metrics for measuring progress and success, specific to the individual objective.

(1) Educate self-represented litigants about general aspects of the New Bridge legal system – The project will review which website resources were used, where the visitors went after they used a resource (such as the

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guidance on New BridgeLawHelp.org), and whether the information provided was helpful. To track New Bridge Court Help usage, project staff will use Google Analytics, which has a multitude of data measures, including the number of visits, number of visitors, geographic location of visitors, and language requested, as well as the amount of time spent on the website. It also provides similar usage statistics for YouTube videos. Google Analytics will allow us to track effectiveness over time, comparing the present to the past, and will further allow project staff to track outreach efforts and set goals for those efforts, which will be vital in tracking project effectiveness as different outreach efforts are completed. To determine level of helpfulness, project staff will solicit feedback on the site and occasionally use an optional visitor survey to obtain self-assessments. The project will conduct a random survey of a select number of court clerks and librarians well into the project to secure their feedback and any comments they have received with users. Phone interviews, mailed questionnaires, and online survey tools are under consideration, and one or more tools will be used to gather the data.

(2) Help self-represented litigants properly handle their simple legal matters -- Project staff will monitor the number of times each A2J Author interview was initiated and the number of times the user completed the interview through document assembly. This information will be secured with the assistance of Law Help Interactive and with the New BridgeLawHelp.org tracking tools already in place.

(3) Build a seamless connection between New Bridge civil trial courts and online resources for self-represented litigants -- Project staff will track the number of New Bridge courts with information on or directly linked from the New Bridge Court Help site.

A formal evaluation plan will be provided to LSC within the grant-required timeframe.

4. Justice community partnerships

The very nature of the New Bridge Court Help project, evidenced by its key partners and project plan, is to create and expand coordination, cooperation, and collaboration within the civil justice community in New Bridge, from the New Bridge Supreme Court to the front-line legal aid organizations, which will, in turn, strengthen state delivery systems. The project arises from a collaboration of several organizations in the New Bridge justice community. Following a 2010 statewide self-represented litigant forum sponsored by the NBAJC, the New Bridge Access to Justice Foundation, NBLSC, OCA, and the Legal Services Corporation, the NBAJC established a committee to focus on improving access to the courts for self-represented litigants. The Self Represented Litigants Committee is composed of representatives of all major stakeholder groups in the state, including judges, clerks, court administrators, legal aid providers, law librarians, and the private bar. One of the main objectives of this statewide collaboration is to increase the availability of self-help services in New Bridge due to the huge growth in the number of self-represented litigants who appear or attempt to appear in courts all over the state. The seeds of New Bridge Court Help began with discussions among committee members. Moreover, New Bridge Court Help will strengthen the relationship between the court system and the legal services community by offering New Bridge legal aid providers an additional resource (and a unique one) to which they can refer clients they are unable to serve. In some instances, the New Bridge Court Help site may also become a resource for volunteer lawyers who want to handle pro bono cases, but are unfamiliar with some areas of law.

5. Replication

Nationally, the legal aid community has seen an explosive growth in the number of persons who need and are financially eligible for free civil legal services, and there are common challenges presented by this vast need,

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regardless of locale. With funding limited in every state, significant numbers of applicants with meritorious claims and defenses are turned down. Often, many of those people attempt to represent themselves. Across the U.S., the number of self-represented litigants has rapidly increased since the 2009 recession began, and all major stakeholders expect this trend to continue. Not only is the prospect of this type of self-advocacy frustrating and daunting for self-represented litigants, but it places additional weight on already over-burdened courts, when they are faced with growing numbers of litigants who do not understand rules, procedures, and documents applicable to their cases. Court personnel and judges also face ethical issues because they are restricted in the help they can offer and accommodations they can make while still remaining impartial. By helping low-income self-represented litigants, the New Bridge Court Help solution (in conjunction with the other linked resources, such as New BridgeLawHelp.org) will provide valuable information and guidance to these litigants, give court personnel and librarians a consolidated resource to offer to those who need help, and generally ease the negative impact imposed on our state court system by the swelling tide of self-represented litigants. As a result of the national strained service environment, New Bridge Court Help provides multiple opportunities for replication, as a project whole or for its component parts.

First, New Bridge Court Help is an innovative collaboration and serves as a replicable model of cooperation. While other states, such as New State and Falls State, have developed some similar components of the New Bridge Court Help project, none of the existing sites has the holistic, collaborative aspect that ties together self-represented litigants, legal services programs, the statewide legal resource website, public libraries, and the entire judicial system. Therefore, the New Bridge Court Help concept itself can be replicated using a wide range of technology solutions and localized content. Also, the project's technology components (YouTube Channel for videos, A2J Author interviews, HotDocs for document assembly, and open source software for the website, e.g.) are widely available and easily used by other states that wish to duplicate this comprehensive approach to helping low-income self-represented litigants.

New Bridge Court Help addresses two of LSC's areas of interest: Increasing Access to Legal Assistance for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Client Populations and Using Mobile Technologies to Provide and Increase Access to Legal Assistance. By translating audio and written material, including A2J Author interviews and document assembly components, into Spanish and Vietnamese, New Bridge Court Help will improve access to justice for low-income families who have limited or no proficiency in English. A parallel effort by the SRL and the New Bridge Supreme Court involves development of Supreme Court-approved bilingual pleadings that all state courts must accept. Once the forms are approved, the New Bridge Court Help's A2J-based document assembly forms will be updated so that LEP self-represented litigants will be able to produce pleadings and other documents in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Improving the availability of competent interpreters for LEP parties - another parallel effort by OCA, NBAJC, and the New Bridge Supreme Court - will complement and be incorporated into the New Bridge Court Help site, and the site will contain the eventual procedures and documents developed by that project. Further, New Bridge Court Help site content will be accessible on many mobile devices. YouTube video content is available on more mobile devices every day and certainly on any computer with Internet access, whether wired or wireless. For the first time in New Bridge, self-represented litigants with mobile YouTube video capabilities will be able to play or re-play instructional videos (at the courthouse steps, if need be) to help them navigate the legal system. Even A2J Author interviews can be accessed from many types of mobile devices. These tools and technologies can be adapted to other projects' and states' needs.

Many New Bridge Court Help components can be replicated by others at low cost, such as using existing servers, buying URLs, YouTube video channels, Google Analytics, web content management software, development of written content, creating partnerships for video production, and use of in-house translators/interpreters. In other instances, including A2J Author interview development and usability studies, other projects and states can benefit from and adapt portions of New Bridge Court Help's work product to reduce replication expenses.

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6. Program capacity and the project staffing

NBLA is LSC's XXX largest field program and spans one-third of New Bridge, approximately XX,XXX square miles, and it encompasses Capitol City, the XXX largest city in the U.S., and Dutch County, the largest county in the state. A firm overview is provided as an Appendix to this grant application.

NBLA has a long history with and extensive experience in securing and managing federal grant funds, having managed these grants since the 1970's. It receives annual support from LSC, currently more than \$X million, and the firm is now operating under a three-year grant. With a rigorous application process, the three-year grant is the highest LSC award and an indicator of NBLA's grant application strength. Additionally, the firm currently has federal funding grants and subcontracts from Equal Justice Works, Capitol City Area Council, and the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (stimulus funds). The Capitol City Area Council grant, a relatively short-term multi-million dollar disaster recovery project, included subcontracts with other legal services providers and also required NBLA to quickly mobilize forces and hire a large number of contract staff for the firm. NBLA has previously administered direct multi-year federal grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

NBLA has recent experience with a TIG grant awarded in 200X for an 18-month project, Action in Courts, directed toward self-represented litigants, which began January 1, 200X. The firm provided grant management oversight, along with input into the development of the Court Guide for New Bridge Law Help. Details of that grant are provided in the Past Performance section of the project narrative. Also, NBLA is operating a 20-month grant from the New Bridge Access to Justice Foundation for a self-represented litigant project that involves kiosk-based self-help centers, and utilizes A2J Author content for local courts, at public libraries in two rural East New Bridge counties. The firm also participated in the 20XX statewide Self-Represented Litigants Forum, and the firm has long served self-represented litigants through pro se clinics and one-on-one self-help guidance. As this background information suggests, NBLA has the demonstrated organizational capacity to oversee the New Bridge Court Help grant.

Extensive project planning conducted in person, via telephone, and via email communication occurred over several months leading up to the grant application submission. Numerous parties contributed to the project plan, including Joe Smith, Supervising Attorney.

NBLA serves as the applicant on behalf of the New Bridge Court Help partnership, and the firm will have chief responsibility for project performance, financial oversight, grant compliance, and reporting (the firm will also provide A2J Author interview development and Vietnamese translations of A2J Author interviews and document assembly components). The firm is joined in the New Bridge Court Help project by an exemplary group of partners: the Office of Court Administration, the New Bridge Access to Justice Collaboration, the Collaboration's Self Represented Litigants Committee, and the New Bridge Legal Services Center. Each entity's reputation, organizational strength, and individual staff qualifications will help ensure the success of the proposed initiative. Due to the number of project partners (five) and the number of key staff persons from these organizations (eight) who will be directly involved in the development and implementation of New Bridge Court Help, only NBLA's organizational capacity is provided in this project narrative. Information on and the qualifications of key project staff persons, as well as the other partners' organizational capacities, are outlined in an Appendix to this grant application.

Each partner organization will make certain their respective staff persons allocated to the grant have the appropriate time available to perform their grant-related responsibilities. Further, the total time commitment of

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each of these persons under the TIG project, when combined with normal non-TIG job duties and any other non-TIG grant projects will not exceed 1.0 FTE. Joe Smith (NBLA), Greg Foster (OCA), Lou Morgan (NBLSC), and Susan Jones (NBAJC and SRL) will monitor activities to ensure compliance in this regard.

7. Past Performance

NBLA, NBLSC, OCA, and ProBono Net partnered in a 200X TIG project, titled Action in Courts (TIG grant XXXXX), which began January 1, 200X, and ran for 18 months. Action in Courts has expanded the access of pro se litigants to the New Bridge court system by adding a “Court Guide” to the New BridgeLawHelp.org website that includes an overview of the New Bridge Court system and a searchable database of New Bridge courts. Since its debut, the Court Guide has been viewed more than 16,000 times and by 13,000 unique visitors. Results from an online survey of more than 108 respondents overwhelmingly rank the feature good to very good on ease of use (67%) and helpfulness (72%). Seventy (70%) percent of respondents said they found the information they needed. The TIG project also funded LiveHelp, which offers visitors real-time assistance to find court and/or legal information needed to file their own legal documents. Like the Court Guide, the LiveHelp chat feature has grown considerably since its debut, with more than 2,000 individuals served, most of who report extremely low-income (56 percent below \$18,000 annual income per year). The project also created an access point for individuals who lack an Internet- connected computer by installing a self-help legal workstation in a rural community. The partnership performed well under the grant, it met the grant milestones and all of the stated objectives, and the project was deemed a success. The project did, however, experience a few technical issues, and these challenges and lessons learned provide guidance for the development of New Bridge Court Help. The challenges and lessons are discussed in the “Other Projects” section of the grant application, along with lessons learned from other organizations’ similar projects.

8. Sustainability of the project

Each key partner (NBLA, OCA, NBLSC, NBAJC, and SRL) has committed to the long-term maintenance and ongoing advancement of New Bridge Court Help, well beyond the one-year grant term required to build and launch the website. In doing so, the partners have made the financial commitment to cover the costs associated with same and to work together to acquire outside funding, when necessary. This is a primary benefit of having a strong, diverse consortium of organizations involved in an effort that is highly important to each entity. When the grant term ends, the chief activities and related costs will be web site hosting and content maintenance. The New Bridge Court Help website domain will be registered for an initial 10-year period, and the site will continue to be hosted on the existing OCA web server supported by appropriations from the New Bridge Legislature. This server is already a part of OCA’s critical infrastructure and is regularly maintained, ensuring continued support for New Bridge Court Help without the need for further host funding. OCA will also absorb the costs associated with connectivity and technical upkeep of the New Bridge Court Help site, and OCA and NBLSC will periodically run “link tests” to make certain all hypertext links are valid on both New Bridge Law Help and New Bridge Court Help.

The New Bridge Court Help website will be part of a larger content management system in which participating organizations and courts can update their own content. OCA will provide these participating entities with technical support and training, if needed. The New Bridge Court Help videos will be hosted on a dedicated YouTube channel, at no cost, which will enable interested parties to embed videos on their websites. A2J Author interviews and document assembly components will be maintained jointly by OCA, NBLA, and NBLSC, with existing staff. NBAJC will periodically refresh and update video on the New Bridge Court Help site, and NBLA will continue to add, adapt, and maintain A2J Author interviews, translate content into Vietnamese, and supply new content to both New Bridge Court Help and New Bridge Law Help. NBLSC will cover the costs of maintaining

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content on New BridgeLawHelp.org. Other legal aid providers, pro bono projects, and law libraries in New Bridge, including some with their own self-represented litigant initiatives, are already committed to providing updated content on the New Bridge Law Help site. Ongoing outreach will be carried out by SRL's Education Subcommittee.

On the occasion that funding is needed for future website additions and enhancements that cannot be absorbed by the key partners, the partners will seek funds from the Legislature and other sources such as the New Bridge Bar Foundation, State Justice Institute, and private foundations. Beyond the initial development and launch of the site, the key partners will work to ensure that the content is accurate and relevant. The key partners will also continue to expand the New Bridge Court Help system and bring in additional contributors and supporters, such as local court administrators, librarians, and other sections of the State Bar of New Bridge.

SAMPLE

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Proposed Payment Schedule
Total of Scheduled Payments: \$71,000

#	Date	Amount	Milestones
1	1/1/2012	\$28,400	
2	6/30/2012	\$14,200	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Contract with project partners and/or vendors for equipment purchases or for the services to be provided for the project. 2 After doing the analysis as outlined in the project narrative of the TIG application, design look and feel of the new web template. 3 Build web template. 4 Write and translate the content specified in the project narrative of the TIG application. 5 Inventory/modify/create/translate A2J Author interviews. 6 Create bilingual video content. 7 Load video content and embed into site. 8 Submit evaluation plan and have it approved by LSC.
3	12/31/2012	\$14,200	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Conduct usability study. 2 Build out localized court pages. 3 Complete written content. 4 Create promotional materials and conduct pre-launch promotional efforts. 5 Conduct in-person and web-based orientations for staff and stakeholders. 6 Make any final changes on the initial New Bridge Court Help site and launch the New Bridge Court Help site. 7 Conduct the post-launch promotional efforts.
4	3/31/2013	\$14,200	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit a final budget showing the actual expenditures on the grant, as well as a budget narrative explaining any changes from the final budget in the award package. 2. Final report approved by LSC.