

THE FLORIDA BAR FOUNDATION

GRANTMAKING POLICY

Pursuant to the consensus on grantmaking reached by the board of directors at its retreat of January 7-8, 1993, the Foundation adopts the following policies in order to insure that its processes for establishment and modification of grant programs, grant-program policies, and the awarding of individual grants are designed to produce professional, fair and thoughtful results:

1. Grant programs of the Foundation shall be established, modified or discontinued by the Board of Directors upon recommendation of the Legal Assistance for the Poor, Law Student Assistance and/or Improvements in the Administration of Justice grant committee(s). Directors and committee members shall be provided the opportunity to discuss such proposed actions in two meetings, except that the two-meeting requirement shall not apply to modifications to existing grant programs which are not significant in nature. Staff shall be provided with full opportunity to research and study the impact of such proposed actions and shall have the responsibility of making recommendations on such actions to the committee.
2. For each grant program, the committee shall adopt written policies specifying grant purposes and may adopt specific allocations of funding (on a year-to-year basis), together with conditions and restrictions as may be deemed appropriate to promote such purpose(s) in consideration of the amount of funds allocated. Staff shall have the responsibility of submitting recommendations concerning such matters to the committee for its consideration.
3. Staff shall be responsible for the design, preparation and distribution of an application schedule and process, including forms and materials, for each grant program reflecting the purposes, allocation amount, conditions and restrictions adopted by the committee and such other matters as may be deemed appropriate by staff to insure a fair and productive grant round.
4. Staff shall have the responsibility for the review of grant applications and other relevant information and to make specific grant recommendations to the committee. Staff shall also be responsible for responding to inquiries from prospective applicants and generally keeping prospective applicants advised of the progress of the application process.

5. The staff shall, as a part of its recommendation of specific grants, report to the committee on the process used to evaluate funding applications, including alternatives considered, the rationale for staff funding recommendations in light of the grant program purpose(s) and any information from an applicant submitted in response to staff recommendations. Such report shall be provided to all committee members in sufficient time to enable committee members an opportunity to review the staff recommendations and contact staff with questions or for more information. Generally, staff funding recommendations should be provided to committee members at a minimum of ten days in advance of the committee meeting at which grant recommendations are to be considered.

Any committee member having questions or objections about any staff funding recommendation or intending to raise objections or modifications to such recommendation at the committee meeting, is encouraged to contact appropriate staff as soon as possible in advance of the meeting to discuss any such objections or modifications. Committee members should contact staff, rather than the applicant regarding questions or information with respect to an application.

Contact with a committee or board member by an applicant or other party seeking the committee or board member's support or opposition to a funding request should be disclosed by the member at the committee or board meeting during discussion of the grant application. Further, grant applicants should be urged to submit any additional materials directly to staff for circulation to the full committee.

6. In the event of emergency funding requests or other exceptional situations in which the above policies and processes would not result in fair and timely funding decisions, the consideration of particular funding requests may deviate from such policies and processes to the extent necessary. In any such event, staff shall immediately consult with the committee chair and a decision shall be made as to how to proceed pursuant to the spirit of these policies and processes.

7. In considering grants, the committee's deliberations generally should be within the context of insuring that the staff recommendations effectuate the committee's grant purposes, that the staff review process was fair and thoughtful and that the rationale for specific grant recommendations is sound. More detailed deliberation on individual grant applications is expected by AOJ grant committee members because of the discretionary nature of that grant program.

8. In considering committee grant recommendations, the Board of Directors should review committee action to insure that these policies have been observed and that the grant recommendations are reflective of the appropriate review by the committee and staff.