

AccessLex Institute® Grant Application Policy

Our grantmaking activities focus on funding projects that have the potential to “move the needle” on important issues facing legal education. We seek grant proposals that address critical issues pertaining to:

- broadening access to legal education, with an emphasis on people from historically underrepresented racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds
- increasing bar passage rates among students and graduates most at-risk of not passing
- increasing affordability of the law degree
- increasing financial literacy among law students and graduates

Sound program and research design rooted in insightful research questions, relevant data and rigorous analytical methods are essential components of strong grant proposals.

We operate three grant programs: the Diversity Pipeline Intervention Grant Program, the Bar Success Intervention Grant Program, and the Bar Success Research Grant Program. We also support research through an invitation-only Directed Grant Program. Our grant programs have awarded over eleven million dollars since their inception in 2014.

If you have questions about this policy, you may direct them to Grants@accesslex.org, with the word “Question” in the subject line.

Before submitting an application to AccessLex for consideration, please review the following information to gain an understanding of our application process, funding priorities, and eligibility requirements.

Grant Program Overview

- **Diversity Pipeline Intervention Grant Program.** This program funds initiatives and interventions that seek to broaden access to legal education and increase law student diversity. The central goal of the Diversity Pipeline Intervention Grant Program is to increase the knowledge base around effective methods for increasing the enrollment and success of law students from historically underrepresented racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Accordingly, we seek to fund collaborative programs that provide participants with meaningful content and experiences as well as holistic support. For more information on diversity pipeline programs, please refer to our report [Priming the Pump: How Pipeline Programs Seek to Enhance Legal Education Diversity](#).
- **Bar Success Intervention Grant Program.** This program funds initiatives and interventions that seek to increase bar exam passage rates among students and graduates most at-risk of not passing. The central goal of the Bar Success Intervention Grant Program is to increase the knowledge base about effective bar exam success programming that is scalable and replicable.
- **Bar Success Research Grant Program.** This program supports well-designed and rigorous studies of the bar examination. Examples of focus include predictors of bar exam performance; bar exam test design and/or efficacy; and successful study or preparation methodologies. Proposals focusing on other relevant aspects of the bar exam are also welcomed.

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Grant Application Process



Step 1: Resource Review and Eligibility Determination

- **Funding Priorities.** Proposals must align with the goal of the specific grant program to which applicants wish to apply (see overview above). Proposed projects can address these issues at the national level or encompass more localized efforts that might be efficiently scaled across institutions and regions for greater impact.
- **Eligibility.** AccessLex will review grant proposals from its member law schools and other U.S.-based nonprofit and public organizations which are classified as tax-exempt under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (Code) and as “public” charities under § 509(a)(1), (2) or (3) of the Code or to public organizations that are designated under § 170(c) of the Code. Faculty, practitioners and researchers who are U.S. citizens or residents are eligible for grants through their affiliated organization, provided it maintains a qualified tax-exempt status as described above. No relatives (defined for this purpose as parents, children, spouses, siblings or in-laws) of Officers or Directors of AccessLex are eligible to apply for a grant.
- **Grant Agreement.** Applicants should be aware that, if selected as a grant award finalist, in order to be awarded a grant, grant award finalists are required to enter into a written agreement for each grant awarded. This agreement describes the terms and conditions of the grant. Applicants will have 90 days from the date they receive a funding invitation to fully execute the grant agreement before the award offer expires. In the event that applicants do not execute the grant agreement within this time-frame, applicants will need to reapply in a subsequent grant cycle if they are still interested in receiving a grant.
- **Program-specific Resources.** The [Diversity Pipeline Intervention Grant Program](#), the [Bar Success Intervention Grant Program](#), the [Bar Success Research Grant Program](#) have additional resources specific to them that applicants should also read. These resources may include materials such as informational PowerPoint presentations, blog posts, or FAQs. Please visit the webpage for the specific grant program to which you are applying to access this information.

Grant Program	Dollar Amount	Duration
Diversity Pipeline	\$200,000–\$300,000	12 to 24 months
Bar Success	\$150,000–\$300,000	12 to 24 months

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Step 2: Letter of Inquiry (LOI) Submission and Review Process

The LOI form is designed to elicit brief information about your grant proposal. Before submitting an LOI for consideration, please read carefully the grant program's frequently asked questions (FAQs). A preview of the LOI form is available for each grant program.

- [Diversity Pipeline Intervention Grant Program – LOI Form Preview](#)
- [Bar Success Intervention Grant Program – LOI Form Preview](#)
- [Bar Success Research Grant Program – LOI Form Preview](#)

All LOI and their supporting materials must be submitted through AccessLex Institute's [online application system](#). Applicants must create an account in order to access the system. AccessLex accepts and reviews LOIs and informs applicants whether they will be invited to submit a full proposal according to the schedule provided below.

If an applicant is currently receiving or has received funding in the past from AccessLex, their past performance may also be taken into consideration during the review of their LOI and/or full proposal. AccessLex may seek additional information from an applicant to help determine whether they will be invited to submit a full proposal. In the event an applicant is unable or not prepared to provide the information as requested, their request for funding may be denied.

Applicants may request feedback on their LOI following the announcement of proposal invitations, but such requests must be made within 90 calendar days from the date of announcement.

Grant Program	Accepting LOIs	Proposal Invitations Announced
Diversity Pipeline	January 15–February 14	By April 14
Bar Success	May 1–May 31	By July 31

Step 3: Full Proposal Invitations and Review Process

AccessLex will invite a select number of applicants to submit a full proposal. An invitation to submit a full proposal does not guarantee funding. A preview of the full proposal application is available for each grant program.

- [Diversity Pipeline Intervention Grant Program – LOI Form Preview](#)
- [Bar Success Intervention Grant Program – LOI Form Preview](#)
- [Bar Success Research Grant Program – LOI Form Preview](#)

Funding decisions will be made in accordance with the schedule below. AccessLex may seek additional information from an applicant to help determine whether they will receive a funding invitation. In the event an applicant is unable or not prepared to provide the information as requested, their request for funding may be denied.

Grant Program	Proposals Due	Funding Invitations Announced
Diversity Pipeline	May 31	By August 2
Bar Success	September 14	By November 15

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During the pendency of any grant application, all contact with staff at AccessLex relating to such application by a potential grantee should be directed to grants@accesslex.org. Any unsolicited contact by an applicant, or any third party on applicant's behalf, with AccessLex management or members of its Board of Directors may weigh negatively on its review.

Step 4: Award Finalization

Applicants should be aware that, if selected as a grant award finalist, in order to be awarded a grant, grant award finalists are required to enter into a written agreement for each grant awarded. This agreement describes the terms and conditions of the grant. Applicants will have 90 days from the date they receive a funding invitation to fully execute the grant agreement before the award offer expires. In the event that applicants do not execute the grant agreement within this time-frame, applicants will need to reapply in a subsequent grant cycle if they are still interested in receiving a grant.

Budgeting

In the LOI phase, applicants may be asked to provide a description of how they generally plan to allocate funds for their project. If invited to submit a full proposal, applicants will be required to submit a detailed budget. In these budgets, applicants may not allocate more than 10 percent of their total direct costs to indirect costs. For example, if the total in direct costs is \$10,000, the total in indirect costs should be limited to \$1,000 (10% of \$10,000) for a total of direct plus indirect costs amounting to \$11,000. In addition, fringe benefit funding is capped at 25% of the personnel salary total.

Additionally, applicants may be invited to attend the AccessLex Legal Education Research Symposium and the Bar Research Forum (if applicable). Applicants for grants in the amount of \$125,000 or higher will be expected to travel at their own expense. Applicants for grants totaling under \$125,000 will be able to invoice AccessLex Institute up to \$1,000 for travel costs associated with fulfilling this request.

- **Direct costs** are expenses directly attributable to the funded project.
- **Indirect costs** are considered to be any expenses for an organization or institution to do business that are not easily attributable to a particular grant, contract, or sponsored activity because they benefit more than one project.

Examples of potential direct and indirect costs are provided in the table below. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

Direct Costs	Indirect Costs
Costs that are <i>directly attributable</i> to the project that cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salaries of project employees• Fringe benefits of employees• Travel for project employees• Consultants• Supplies• Subgrants (work sourced from primary grantee to another organization and funding is provided upfront)• Subcontracts (work sourced from the primary grantee to another organization and funding is based on invoicing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing facilities• Utilities for existing facilities• Existing information technology equipment and support• Existing shared equipment• Existing equipment maintenance• Depreciation on equipment• Insurance• Communications expenses (e.g., phones)• Administrative office supplies• General administration support

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The schedule for submitting interim and final narrative and budget grant reports will be set out in the grant agreements. If a grantee requires an extension of time to submit any such reports, or if the grantee is looking to reallocate certain budget line-items, they should reach out to Grants@accesslex.org for instructions.

Importantly, the grant agreements contain provisions regarding publicity and the publication of interim and final research results. We ask that all our grantees review these sections carefully and contact Grants@accesslex.org with any questions or concerns.

Other Matters

- AccessLex reserves the right to modify or cancel this Policy at any time without notice.
- The existence and operation of this Policy does not obligate the Company to offer grant funding to any applicant.
- Due to limited resources, AccessLex cannot invite full proposals from all LOIs.
- Grant funds may not be used for religious, lobbying, political activities or to support litigation.
- AccessLex does not make grants directly to individuals or to for-profit organizations.