

MEMORANDUM

TO: JCIP Advisory Committee

FROM: Amy Benedum, JCIP Staff

RE: JCIP Funding Request Guidelines (FKA “Mini Grants”)

DATE: September 21, 2021

Background

OJD’s Juvenile Court Improvement Program (JCIP) grant permits OJD to fund outside trainings or events that support JCIP goals: increasing the quality of dependency court hearings, improving the system response to the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in foster care, and improving judicial practices and leadership in juvenile dependency cases.

History

Prior to 2015, the JCIP Advisory Committee would award substantial JCIP funds for events, equipment, attendance at conferences for judges and staff, and other types of requests.

As an example, in 2010 the JCIP Advisory Committee and the JCIP Training & Education Subcommittee approved \$31,090 in funds to be awarded to the following:

- \$1000 for Judge attendance at NCJFCJ Annual Conference
- \$2,040 for a computer for a judge’s bench to review court reports electronically
- \$1000 for a model court team to develop & publish a brochure for children/teens
- \$2800 for a model court team to print 1k copies of an interactive children’s book
- \$300 for courtroom supplies for children (coloring books, markers, Legos, etc)
- \$2200 to a model court team for computer and office supplies
- \$5000 to a model court team to support their model court conference
- \$5000 to send a stakeholder to a national juvenile justice reform practice site
- \$1000 to support sending foster children/families to a county diversity training
- \$5000 for ODAA conference
- \$5000 to JLTA
- \$5000 to Shoulder to Shoulder
- \$5250 to CRB for their conference
- \$2000 to Catholic Community Svcs for their Transitioning Foster Youth convening

- \$2000 to Juvenile Rights Project for attorney travel funds to JLRC training

At the September 2015 Advisory Committee meeting, the committee members expressed confusion about the advisory committee's role in awarding funding requests and concern that some courts were unaware of the funding opportunities, thereby leading to an unequal distribution of this funding. The committee members decided to form a Funding Guidelines Subcommittee to review and revise the funding guidelines for JCIP. In March 2016, the proposed JCIP funding guidelines were approved and posted on the JCIP website; these guidelines included two application forms, one for individuals and one for organizations. Shortly after these guidelines were developed and approved, the JCIP grant was significantly scaled back from previous funding amounts, which led to a sharp decrease in the funds available for JCIP to disburse for training, education, and equipment to support JCIP's mission. In order to maximize the funding that JCIP did have, it was decided by JCIP leadership to limit the funding to two statewide educational conferences: \$5000 to Shoulder-to-Shoulder to pay for speaker fees and other training costs, and \$5000 to the Juvenile Law Training Academy for the same.

Current Process

The JCIP funding guidelines from March 2016 are still in effect today. (see Appendix)

However, because the money available has been capped at \$10,000 for the past several years, JCIP has not been considering funding requests outside of Shoulder-to-Shoulder and JLTA. The

funding request guidelines and funding applications are no longer on the JCIP website and are not readily searchable.

Recommendations

1. As JCIP is still awarding funding requests, even on a limited basis, JCIP should republish the funding request guidelines and the applications on the JCIP website. JCIP should send information about the funding guidelines and applications to every court and juvenile stakeholder so that all parties have an equal opportunity to apply.
2. When awarding funding requests, JCIP Advisory Committee should consider each request using the guidelines previously established and should vote on the requests. Options for reviewing these requests include the full Advisory Committee at each meeting or selected meetings or in a subcommittee established for that purpose.
3. JCIP Director should share with the Advisory Committee the approximate funds available each year for these funding requests, so that the Committee can make an informed approval decision.
4. The Advisory Committee should reconvene a Funding Guidelines Subcommittee to review the 2016 guidelines for fidelity to the larger JCIP grant's intent and compliance with federal grant requirements.

JCIP Funding Requests Guidelines

The purpose of the Juvenile Court Improvement Program (JCIP) mini-grant award program is to provide support for projects or activities that further statewide JCIP and local Model Court Improvement goals, and are meant to support innovative efforts that enhance the broader multi-disciplinary approach.

Grant Awards range from \$500 to \$5,000. ****Funding availability may vary each fiscal year. If your request is for less than this amount, a grant application is not required. Please contact us directly.**

The following guidelines will be applied to funding decisions:

JCIP will consider grant requests for the following:

Group projects that:

- Demonstrate a multi-disciplinary approach.
- Demonstrate a coordinated approach when there are similar local or statewide initiatives. Duplication of effort will not be rewarded.
- Demonstrate that all stakeholders involved are contributing to the proposed project.
- Demonstrate the ability to be replicated statewide.
- Support Individual or Group Professional Development Scholarships to attend conferences related to the multi-disciplinary approach that improves our collective work together.
- Support multidisciplinary, geographic representation.
- Pilot innovative approaches to meeting JCIP and Model Court goals that have the potential to benefit courts statewide

JCIP will not accept the following requests:

- Requests to underwrite fundraising events.
- Requests to pay ongoing salaries or employment costs, however, they can cover short-term, temporary staff for Juvenile Court projects, such as "data clean-up".
- Requests for meals and/or lodging that exceed OJD policy requirements.

All grant applicants must:

- Agree that all materials, videos, etc. can be posted on the JCIP Website and used by all stakeholders.
- Agree that written materials will acknowledge support from JCIP by including the following statement: "This (project/training/or publication – whichever word is appropriate) was made possible through federal grant funds from the Juvenile Court Improvement Program."
- Include detailed budget information of proposed project that includes costs, funding being provided by other sources, and any income.
- Submit a completed grant application for 1. Individual or Group Professional Development Funds, or 2. Request for Program/Project Funding.

Individual requests:

- Any OJD requests for hardware and software must be vetted and approved through ETSD. Requests should explain why the purchase cannot be included in the local budget.
- Any equipment becomes the property of OJD, should the project terminate.
- Judicial requests for pro tem support must demonstrate how the specialized