



Public Health Program

Lawyering on the Margins Grant Competition

The Open Society Public Health Program is calling for letters of intent from energetic rights-oriented organizations to lead and shape the future of the global Lawyering on the Margins initiative.

Background

In different regions and contexts, lawyers have dedicated themselves to advocating for the rights of some of the most excluded people in society; including people who use drugs (PWUD), sex workers, and people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI), whose marginalized status makes them vulnerable to poor health outcomes, and abuses from police and the justice system, health care workers, family members, and others.

The critical work of asserting the rights of marginalized people and protecting them from ill treatment attracts attorneys deeply committed to equal rights and access to justice. However, lawyers representing marginalized communities are themselves often struggling against great odds with little support.

In 2011, the Open Society Public Health Program (PHP) hosted the first Lawyering on the Margins (LOTM) convening in Copenhagen, bringing together lawyers from 15 countries for three days to meet, network and exchange strategies for ensuring that PWUD, sex workers, and LGBTI groups have access to justice and strong representation on their side. The LOTM initiative formalizes and elevates a community of lawyers upholding the rights of marginalized groups, recognizes the work of these pioneering lawyers, and establishes an important and legitimate field of rights-based work.

Based on partner demand, subsequent LOTM conferences took place in Cape Town (2012), Vancouver (2014), and Ohrid/Skopje (2015), providing a space for lawyers to share ideas and strategize creatively. The LOTM is highly valued by the lawyers who have attended these conferences and connected with one another through the LOTM network. As it has evolved, the LOTM has come to fill an important niche, facilitating peer learning and a community of lawyers engaged in cutting edge work with marginalized populations. It has inspired important new ideas and collaborative projects advancing access to justice and the right to health.

The Open Society Public Health Program is now looking for new and creative ideas from an organization committed to the promotion and defense of the rights of marginalized communities.

Guidelines

We welcome letters of intent from networks or coalitions as well as individual organizations (where a coalition is proposed, one organization must be nominated as the lead). Interested applicants should upload their letters of intent of no more than three pages by **August 14, 2016** through the Open Society Foundations' grantmaking portal "Foundation Connect" using the following link: <http://bit.ly/29ak0vO>.

Applicants can apply for a maximum of USD 140,000 for a period of 24 months starting between January and March 2017.

The Public Health Program will consider letters of intent that include the following:

- Name and location of the administering organization, network or coalition.
- Name and contact information, including email address, of the person submitting the letter of intent.
- A brief description of the applying organization, network, or coalition, including how Lawyering on the Margins intersects with other areas of its work.
- A description of the vision for the future of LOTM, including a clear articulation of the connection between justice and health for marginalized populations. The project description should include a global meeting that brings together lawyers working with marginalized populations; as well as new activities to connect and support the lawyers, and to build and strengthen the LOTM initiative.
- An overview of the budget (5-10 broad, preliminary budget line items).

Successful applicants will be contacted and will have until September 30, 2016 to submit full proposals for consideration.

Opportunity for Questions and Answers

A call-in information and Q&A session regarding this grant opportunity will be held on July 27, 2016 at 9:00 EDT. Anyone interested in joining the call should email Volha Baraulia at volha.baraulia@opensocietyfoundations.org for further details.

Formal competition announcement is posted on the OSF website here:

<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/lawyering-margins-grant-competition-20160712>.

Additional Resources/Links

<http://www.interights.org/document/296/index.html>

http://www.pivotlegal.org/lawyering_on_the_margins_2015

<http://transgenderlawcenter.org/archives/2790>

<http://rabble.ca/podcasts/shows/redeye/2014/05/lawyering-on-margins>