Using the legal needs survey to help your grant application

Presented by

Erin Dolan
Grants and Awards Manager
Victoria Law Foundation

Jane Kenny
Grants and Legal Information Manager
Law and Justice Foundation of NSW
Presentation overview

• Who we are
• Where to find helpful resources
• Using your own data
• Legal needs survey – key findings
• Other tips
• Contact details
• Questions
Using research for your grant application

• Justifies your methodology
• Demonstrates a need
• Shows your expertise

So why people don’t use evidence in their application?
Law and Justice Foundation of NSW

- The LJF is an independent, not-for-profit, statutory body which seeks to advance the fairness and equity of the justice system and improve access to justice, for people in NSW.
- Four main programs: Research, Grants, Legal information & referral and the annual Justice Awards.
Law and Justice Foundation of NSW

- Grants are provided for projects that fit within our statutory objects.
- The Foundation accepts small grant applications of up to $5000 at any time. Applications for general grants of up to $50,000 typically close on 31 March and 31 August annually.
Victoria Law Foundation

- The Foundation is a not-for-profit, independent statutory body that helps Victorians understand their legal system and the law
- Three main programs: Grants, Publications and Education
- Advocates for plain language
Victoria Law Foundation

• The Foundation awards $500,000 in grants each year for law-related projects that benefit the people of Victoria
• Grants are assessed based on:
  – Statutory functions
  – Guidelines
  – Strategic priorities
Legal need survey overview

- Law and Justice Foundation NSW (2012) *Legal Australia-Wide Survey: Legal need in Australia*
- Legal problems that people experience, their responses and outcomes they achieve
- Largest legal needs survey in the world; 20,716 interviews across Australia
Other resources

- Crime statistics
- Immigration statistics
- Federal, state, council
- Other, ie literacy, health
Other resources - examples

• In 2009, 76% of 12-14 year olds owned a mobile phone and 96% had used the internet in the last twelve months.

  – Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Social Trends: Children of the digital revolution (June 2011)
Other resources - examples

- Family violence is the leading preventable contributor to death, disability and illness in Victorian women aged 15–44.

Internal data

Tell us who you are

• Use your own data to sell yourself
• Annual report
• Make a compelling case - don’t just refer to website
Internal data

• Why this project is relevant to you?
• For example
  – X% of clients we see have Y legal problems
  – We have a high number of XX people in our community
Legal needs survey – key findings

Who has the highest prevalence of legal problems?

- 60.3% for respondents with a disability
- The survey concluded that people with disabilities ‘may require considerable legal and non-legal support in order to address their legal problems effectively.’
Legal needs survey – key findings

Age related to prevalence strategies and finalisation suggesting a life cycle for legal problems

- For instance, employment issues are much higher for 18-24 year olds than for any other age group
- Credit/debt issues are highest for 25-34 year old category
- Family problems peak at 35-44 years
Legal needs survey – key findings

What are the legal needs of CALD, LOTE, refugees?

• Respondents with a non-English main language had lower prevalence of legal problems
• Respondents with a non-English main language were much higher at not taking legal actions
Legal needs survey – key findings

Legal needs are significant for the general population

• Over 8.5 million people in Australia have had a legal problem in the last 12 months
• Almost 1/5 people who have a legal problem will take no action
• People taking no action achieved the poorest outcomes
Legal needs survey – key findings

How people respond to their legal problem
• 50% of people sought advice

Where do people go for legal advice?
• people almost as likely to see a GP for legal advice as they are to see a private lawyer (Private lawyers 21.3%; GP 18.9%)
• Community Legal Centres 1.7%
Legal needs survey
– key findings

Enhancing legal capability through information and education

1. Awareness of free legal services was consistently poor
2. Many people who ignored their problems didn’t know how to obtain assistance
3. Some disadvantaged groups may fail to recognise that their problems have legal implications and solutions
Other tips

Acknowledge what you don’t know

• Legal needs survey – we don’t know why there is a lower prevalence for non-English main language

• It could be X, Y, Z

• This requires further investigation, hence why we’re asking for funding
Other tips

Be clear on your outcomes

• ‘Project will stop family violence’.
• ‘Project will direct victims/survivors of family violence to appropriate legal referrals’.
Other tips

Be aware of the limitations of stats – don’t go beyond your data

• For example
  – Victoria crime statistics state that violence is on the rise
Contact
Jane Kenny
Grants and Legal Information Manager
Law and Justice Foundation of NSW
T  02 8227 3210
E  jkenny@lawfoundation.net.au
W www.lawfoundation.net.au
Contact

Erin Dolan
Grants and Awards Manager
Victoria Law Foundation
T 03 9604 8100
E edolan@victorialawfoundation.org.au
W www.victorialawfoundation.org.au
Twitter: @erin_dolan