



National Bar Institute

“The Philanthropic Arm of the National Bar Association”

Grants Program

National Bar Institute Purpose

The National Bar Institute, Inc. (NBI) is a tax-exempt corporation organized under 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The NBI was established in 1982 by members of the National Bar Association to educate the public concerning contemporary legal issues, to ensure quality legal educational opportunities for all Americans, and to enhance the quality of legal services provided to people of color and the poor.

The goal of the NBI for the 21st Century is to provide significant financial support to the legal, educational, and social strategies devised by the National Bar Association to continue its quest to ensure civil and human rights, and equal justice for all.

National Bar Institute Objectives

The NBI has established the following goals and objectives to support the National Bar Association in its continuing struggle for equal justice for all.

- To endow the financial future of the National Bar Association;
- To support deserving law students and law students programs which enhance the quality of legal education;
- To finance (in whole or in part) litigation which is of significant public importance;
- To support public forums where lectures, discussions and debates on legal subjects are presented to the general public;
- To publish scholarly writings on legal subjects for dissemination to the general public; and
- To improve the administration of justice and to promote high ethical standards for lawyers and judges.

All grant program proposals must come within the purpose of the National Bar Institute, and must fit within any of the above objectives to receive consideration for funding. Funding consideration will be given to Applications in substantial compliance with the requirements on the appropriate form. An Applicant whose proposal is approved and funded (a “Grantee”) must sign a Grant Letter Agreement which will include the following terms of acceptance:

1. No part of any funds may be used to lobby or otherwise attempt to influence the outcome of any specific public election or participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office; nor for any non-charitable purpose.
2. Funding will be made with the expectation that Applicant will obtain additional funding from other sources, if applicable. Disbursement of funds will be tailored to the particular grant proposal.
3. Grantee must maintain books and records of the Funded Program or Project and provide periodic status reports and final report.
4. Public announcements of Program, news releases, and Program literature on the Program must reference partial funding by the National Bar Institute.
5. If the Grantee fails to abide by the terms of the Grant Letter Agreement, the NBI may terminate the grant and recover any unspent or improperly spent grant funds.
6. Grantee must notify the NBI of any changes of address and telephone numbers included on Application.

NATIONAL BAR INSTITUTE GRANTS PROGRAM

Lucia Thomas Public Image Action Grants

The Lucia Thomas Public Image Action Grants Program was established by Board action August 6, 1996 during the NBI Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL. These Action Grants provide seed money to NBA Affiliate Chapters and Subdivisions for programs that promote education, equity among the races, and/or improve the image of lawyers. The proposed activity must have direct and demonstrated community or public impact. The grants are awarded through a competitive grant application process. To be eligible, the NBA entity must be currently financial with the NBA, or must remit fees with the application. The range of the grants shall be from \$500 to \$2,000, depending on the availability of funds.

NBI African American Law Student Fellowship Program

The African American Law Student Fellowship Program, a project of the Institute, was developed to assist law students who are completing professional law degrees, a field where African-American participation has traditionally been low. The NBI awards law student fellowships annually to (a maximum of) three law students. To be eligible, a law student must have been, among other things, carrying a full time class load at a U.S. law school; be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident; have at least two consecutive years of full time law student experience and intend to return to the Black community to practice law once legal training is completed. Fellowships range from \$1,000 to \$10,000 depending on the availability of funds, with \$2,500 being the generally recommended amount.

A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. Endowed Scholarship

The A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. Endowed Scholarship was established in 1999 in Philadelphia, following the death of The Honorable A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. Our guidelines for named endowments require an initial funding of \$5,000 or more, and must reach the stipend producing level of \$50,000 in ten years. As of January 2001, this Endowment has not been funded.

General Grants Categories *(with examples of Programs or Projects that have been approved)*

I. NBA Membership Development Grants

- Survey of Lawyers Needs Assessment
- Telemarketing Project
- NBA Constitution and By-Laws Mailing

II. Scholarships, Educational and Professional Development

- Judicial Council Externship Program
- NBA History Book: *A Search for Equal Justice by African-American Lawyers – A History of the National Bar Association* (1999) by Elmer C. Jackson, Jr., Esq. And Jacob U. Gordon, Ph.D.
- National Black Law Students Association Annual Conference
- NBLSA Regional Conferences
- National Conference on African American Women and the Law
- MLK, Jr. Drum Major for Justice Advocacy Competition for High School Students
- Council on Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO)

III. Litigation

The NBI will consider requests for support for litigation to advance the cause of civil rights, human rights and economic empowerment.

Other NBI Contributions to NBA

- NBA Hall of Fame Luncheon, annually
- The Gertrude E. Rush Award Dinner, annually
- NBA Convention Awards Banquet, annually

Recipient Service

The NBI will serve as the recipient organization on behalf of NBA Subdivisions, upon proper request and documentation that meets the requirements of the NBI Grants Program, General Grants: Scholarships, Educational and Professional Development. This will enable Subdivisions to request funding from other sources and extend tax deduction opportunities to their donors.

The NBI may assess an administrative charge of 5% of all such funds received for Subdivision Programs or Projects.

NBI Grants Program Application and Funding Schedule

Lucia Thomas Public Image Action Grants

- Fund twice annually
- Applications due October 1
Fund January 30
- Applications due March 1
Fund August 15

General Grants

- Large Grants > \$20,000
Applications due by January 5
Fund: April 15
- Small Grants < \$20,000
Applications due by September 1
Fund: December 1

NBI African American Law Student Fellowship Program

(Separate application form)

Award once annually

- Applications due May 15
Fund: August 15

- **Applicants for Recipient Services** must make requests at least thirty (30) days prior to the regularly scheduled NBI Board Meeting at which such requests shall be considered. Applicants must be present at that NBI Board Meeting. Requests must be made on the *Request for Recipient Services* form.
- **Emergency Requests**, i.e., requests outside the relevant Application and Funding Schedule, should be rare, and should not reflect a lack of advanced planning or thought by the requesting party. Board consideration will be made in the Board's discretion, upon receipt of the Applicant's reason for the Emergency Request. All Emergency Requests must be accompanied by a completed Application.

Grant Applications are available from the National Bar Institute Office, the National Bar Association Office and from Members of the NBI Board of Trustees.