

Call for Expressions of Interest (Eoi)

Building a Self-Help System for the District of Columbia

July 23, 2026

The DC Bar Foundation (DCBF) invites qualified organizations to submit an Expression of Interest (Eoi) to serve as the lead implementing organization for the District's new Self-Help System.

Unlike a traditional grant or service contract, DCBF is seeking an organization with the vision, expertise, and capacity to provide long-term strategic leadership and adopt a multi-stakeholder approach to serve as DCBF's implementing partner in designing, developing, operating, and continuously improving a sustainable, and user-centered self-help system for the District of Columbia. The system will complement the Foundation's investments in the [DC Resource Bridge](#), the direct legal services provided by our grantees and other legal services providers, and the upcoming Community Justice Workers initiative, helping close the justice gap by creating a more coordinated continuum of civil legal assistance for District residents.

DCBF anticipates issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) shortly after the close of the Call for Expressions of Interest. All organizations that submit an Eoi will be notified of the RFP release and provided opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback through information and Q&A sessions during the proposal development period. The purpose of this Eoi is to gauge interest, better understand organizational capabilities, identify innovative implementation approaches, receive early feedback on the proposed model, and help inform and strengthen the final RFP and implementation approach.

Building the Self-Help System

In June 2022, the DC Access to Justice Commission established its Self-Help Work Group to advance a more coordinated, user-centered approach to self-help services in the District. Since then, the Work Group has conducted an inventory of existing self-help materials and services; identified gaps, duplication, and opportunities for improvement; explored user testing; proposed and developed high-priority forms and resources; and engaged courts, legal aid providers, government agencies, and other stakeholders to pave the way for a more coordinated approach to self-help services across the District.

These efforts culminated in the Commission's 2024 report, [Justice for All: Self-Help in the District of Columbia](#), which proposes a self-help model built around ten essential elements. Building on this work, DCBF seeks an implementing partner capable of translating this

vision into a sustainable operational system that will serve District residents for years to come.

The Opportunity

DCBF seeks to identify a lead implementing organization with the vision, institutional capacity, and collaborative leadership to build, operate, and sustain a coordinated, and user-centered self-help system for the District of Columbia through a multi-stakeholder approach. Working in partnership with DCBF, the DC Resource Bridge (DCRB), the DC Access to Justice Commission, courts, legal services organizations, government agencies, and community organizations, the selected organization will help create an integrated self-help system that complements existing legal services and expands access to civil legal assistance.

The implementing partner will lead the programmatic and operational aspects of the initiative, including identifying community needs; working collaboratively with the legal aid community and other stakeholders to design, develop, and maintain self-help resources; creating and maintaining legal information content; establishing content governance and quality assurance processes; coordinating partnerships; conducting user testing; leading client engagement; and driving continuous improvement. The implementing partner will also lead the program's digital self-help strategy by defining user needs, designing technology-enabled solutions, and developing the content, wireframes, and functional requirements needed for the technology partner to build, maintain, and enhance digital self-help tools.

The program will work in close coordination with the DC Resource Bridge. All self-help resources developed through this initiative will be made publicly available through the [DC Resource Bridge website](#), which will serve as the District's central online access point for self-help resources. DCBF's existing DCRB technology partner will continue to provide platform hosting, maintenance, software development, and technical support. The implementing partner will provide the programmatic vision, self-help content, user experience and design requirements, and functional specifications for all online, interactive, AI-enabled, and other digital self-help resources to ensure that the technology platform aligns with the program's objectives and the needs of District residents.

How to Respond

As the DC Bar Foundation prepares to issue an RFP later this year to identify a lead implementing partner for the District's Self-Help System, we invite organizations interested in this opportunity to submit a Statement of Interest and engage with us during this early stage of the process.

We are seeking organizations with vision, collaborative leadership, and institutional capacity to work alongside DCBF and our partners to build and sustain a coordinated, user-centered

self-help system for the District. This is an opportunity to help shape one of the District's most significant access-to-justice initiatives by creating a sustainable self-help system that complements existing legal services and expands access to reliable legal information and assistance for District residents.

This invitation is open to individual organizations, collaborative partnerships, and consortia with relevant experience and expertise. To submit an Expression of Interest, please send your organization's Statement of Interest to: innovation@dcbfoundation.org by **September 18, 2026, at 5:00 PM ET.**

Responses should be submitted as a single PDF or Word document of no more than six (6) pages, excluding any attachments, and should address each of the following questions:

1. Organizational Profile

Briefly describe your organization — its mission, size, and primary areas of work. What is the nature of your relationship to the legal aid, access-to-justice, or related field? If proposing as a partnership or consortium, try to identify each partner and describe the proposed roles and structure.

2. Relevant Experience

Describe your most relevant prior experience. What programs or initiatives have you led that are most similar to what is described here — whether in legal self-help, digital content development, AI-assisted tools, in-person service navigation, multi-stakeholder program management, or a related area? What did you build, what did you learn, and what would you do differently?

3. Organizational Capacity

What is your current capacity to take on a sustained, multi-year initiative of this scope? Describe your existing staffing relevant to this work and identify significant gaps you would need to address. What would your year-one staffing model look like? Be candid about what you would need to build.

4. Approach to the Full Spectrum of Self-Help

This Initiative encompasses written materials, AI-assisted tools, in-person support, and integration with the Community Justice Workers model — not a single modality. How do you think about the relationship among these different forms of self-help? What would your approach be to building across the full spectrum over time?

5. Technology and Digital Strategy

Describe your experience with digital platforms, content management, user experience design, and legal technology — including AI-assisted tools. What technology capabilities would you bring, and what would you need to develop or acquire?

6. Approach to the DC Ecosystem

Describe your existing relationships — if any — with the DC civil legal aid community, including legal services providers, courts, government agencies, and funders. How would you approach building trust with a community that is engaged, capacity-constrained, and collaborative by culture?

7. Vision and Early Priorities

If selected, what would your priorities be in the first 12 months? What would you want to learn, what would you want to build, and what would success look like at the end of year one? This is not a proposal — we are looking for your preliminary thinking about how you would approach getting started.

8. Questions and Feedback

What questions do you have about this opportunity or the EoI process? We welcome candid feedback on the Initiative design as described, including aspects that concern you or factors we may not have considered.

Learn More About the Initiative

To help organizations better understand the vision for this initiative and the work completed to date, DCBF encourages interested organizations to review the following resources:

- [Justice for All: Self-Help in the District of Columbia \(DC Access to Justice Commission, September 2024\)](#)
- [DC Resource Bridge Website](#)

Thank you for considering this opportunity and for your interest in advancing access to justice in the District of Columbia.

We look forward to engaging with organizations that share this vision and are interested in helping to shape and implement this important initiative.

Warm regards,

Kirra L. Jarratt
Chief Executive Officer
DC Bar Foundation