

The
Legal
Education
Foundation

Annual Review 2017



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2017 in numbers

Grants

91

Total awarded in 2017

16% up on 2016

£5,038,000

Grants with an IT focus

29

Funding partners

19

Justice First Fellows

15

Total awarded since TLEF began in

£15m

1. Understanding and using law
2. Improving legal training and practice
3. Supporting next generation of lawyers

A year of growth and learning

Matthew Smerdon
Chief executive



The story at the Foundation this year is one of continued growth in our grant making, and our ongoing commitment to reflect on how we make best use of resources in the context of radical change across the legal system.

The Foundation distributed more than £5m in 2016-17 through 91 grants, taking the total amount awarded since our launch in 2013 to over £15m. Our Justice First Fellowship recruited and placed a further 15 aspiring social justice lawyers, and we saw our first cohort of Fellows graduate to become qualified lawyers. All of them have gone on to secure jobs as solicitors.

Across the first three rounds of the Fellowship, the Foundation's commitment of £2.4m has been supplemented by over £1m in co-funding, which we attracted from other grant-making trusts, law firms, and a bank. Host organisations have already been selected for the fourth round of 17 Fellows, which will take the total number to more than 50. This represents a significant injection of new capacity into the social welfare law sector at a time of rising legal need and ongoing pressure on resources.

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Drawing all this work together is a driving belief in the law as a tool to solve people's problems.

All the Fellows, in the course of their training, are providing vital advice and support to people across all four countries of the UK. They are also developing the skills and networks they will need to build rewarding careers, enabling them to provide this expert legal support long into the future.

This annual review sets out activities across all three strategic objectives: [understanding and using law](#); [improving legal training and practice](#); [supporting next generation of lawyers](#). It also highlights new areas of focus for the Foundation, following a mid-term strategy review. We give details of all the grants made last year, and also include a case study for each objective, to give a deeper insight into how legal education and training, focused sharply on responding to people's legal needs, are contributing to the Foundation's mission and vision.

The mid-term strategy review reinforced our commitment to key areas of the Foundation's approach, and introduced some significant new developments. The Foundation's first five-year plan recognised the importance of developing the evidence base for our work, and of exploring the role of information technology. Both these areas remain fundamental to our approach. Director of research and learning Natalie Byrom, on page [34](#), and deputy chief executive Alan Humphreys, on page [37](#), set out this work in more detail.

The strategy review also identified areas of activity which the governors have decided to develop. One consequence was the creation of a new post at the Foundation: head of policy and public affairs, and we were extremely fortunate to recruit Swee Leng Harris to the team. ▶

1. Understanding and using law
2. Improving legal training and practice
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Swee Leng has a background in public and international law, and is an expert on the rule of law. The focus for this policy work in the last year has, inevitably, been on understanding the profound implications of the UK's vote to leave the EU. Swee Leng explains further at page 35.

We have also benefited from continuing to work with experienced sector journalist and campaigner Fiona Bawdon who at page 36 writes about her work with the Foundation and with the Justice First Fellows to increase communications activity.

Finally, the mid-term strategy review encouraged us to look at themes that cut across our objectives. This reflects the need to use a combination of approaches, to amplify the impact of legal education by harnessing research, policy, communications, and information technology, in the delivery of the Foundation's goals. Drawing all this work together is a driving belief in the role of the law as a tool to solve problems. This underscores the urgency of finding ways to integrate and embed effective legal education and legal services in the places where people and organisations most need them, and at the earliest opportunity.

As part of the focus on effectiveness, the Foundation's governors asked staff to develop and introduce a systematic approach to reviewing all completed grants. We are using this to review grants across five categories: delivery of activities; achievement of outcomes; strength of the evidence base for these outcomes; how far the funded organisation has reflected on the activities and learned lessons; and how far the work has been able to be sustained. Analysis of

more than 80 completed projects highlighted the excellent work that funded organisations are delivering, as well as the challenges, particularly around developing the methods for robust measurement of impact. We will be focusing on further work to address this in 2017-18.

Looking ahead to next year, alongside ongoing direct funding of legal education and training, the Foundation will seek to contribute the knowledge we have gathered from our grant-making to key developments. We will continue to engage with HM Courts and Tribunal Service Transformation Programme. We have met the Solicitors Regulation Authority to discuss developments on the Solicitors Qualifying Exam, and will also be looking at the role of legal apprenticeships. We will continue to support specialist civil society organisations to inform the policy process around withdrawal from the EU. And our work on seed funding successful new models of delivery – for example using internet video tools, such as Skype – and of funding legal advice, will continue to address the questions of how to scale up these projects.

We will also look at our growing work to strengthen legal services organisations. So far this has included grants, our first loan, provision of consultants, and direct support by TLEF staff to support areas including financial management, practice management and leadership training, organisational restructuring, communications, IT infrastructure development and collaboration. We are looking at drawing this activity together.

Vision

We believe that the law plays an essential part in supporting civil society, economic development and democracy. Our vision is of a society where everyone understands the role and value of the law and has the capability and opportunity to use it to ensure their rights, and to fulfil the obligations that accompany these rights.

Mission

Our charitable purpose, set out by Royal Charter, is to 'promote the advancement of legal education and the study of the law in all its branches'. We do this so that those working in legal services can be equipped to meet legal needs to the highest standards, and reflect the diversity of our society. We also do this so that individuals and organisations with legal needs can learn how to use the law, so as to secure fair treatment and protection.

The Foundation's work only happens because of the determination of our governors, of the specialist advisors to our committees, and of my colleagues at the Foundation, working across administration, finance, IT, investment, strategy, research, policy, communications and grants programme delivery. It also depends on the people and organisations in the field, and on funders and other institutions who share our objectives and are keen to collaborate. Heartfelt thanks to you all.

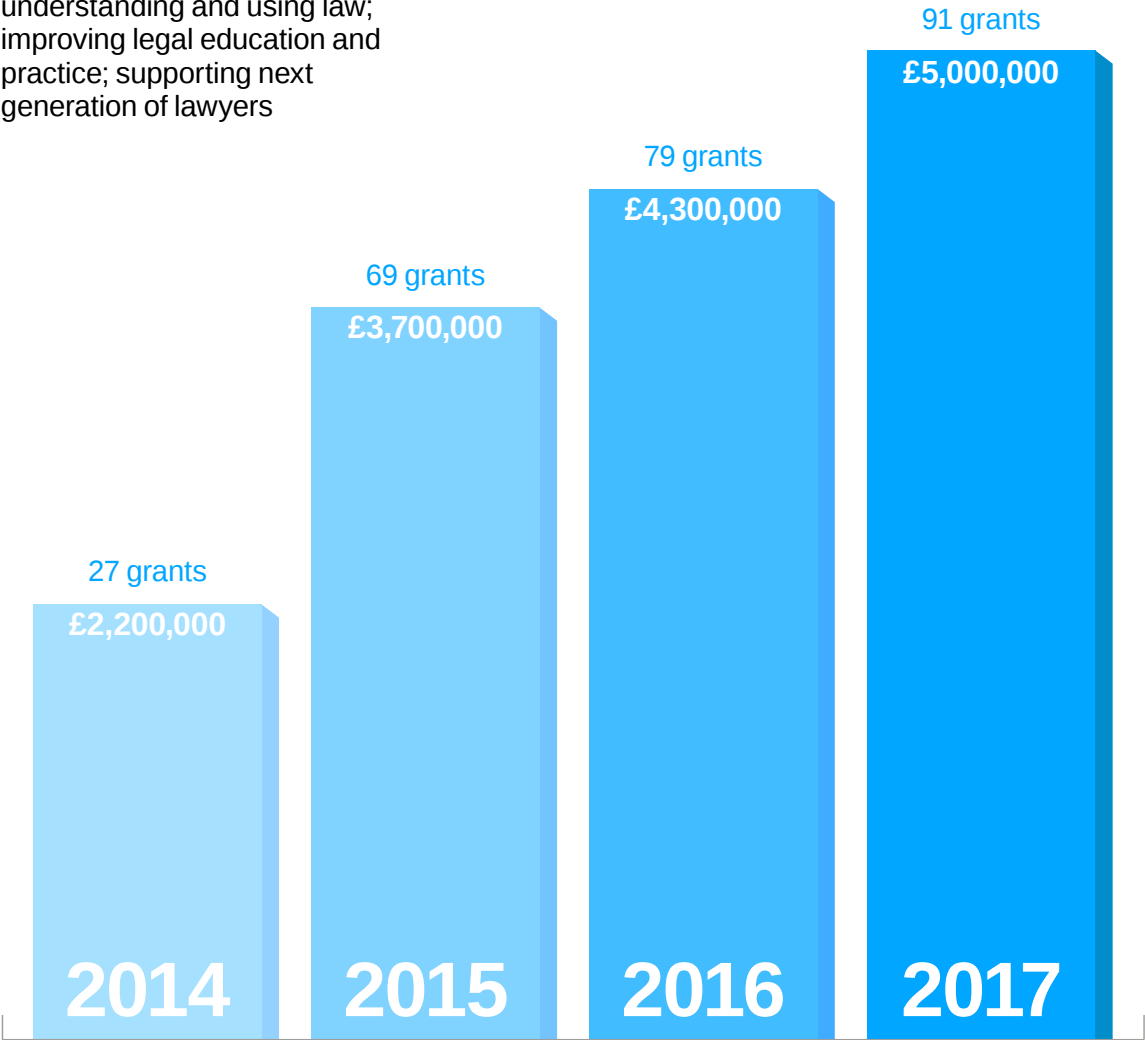


Matthew Smerdon

- 1. Understanding and using law
- 2. Improving legal training and practice
- 3. Supporting next generation of lawyers

Grants overview

Funding continues to increase year on year for grants made in support of TLEF's three objectives: understanding and using law; improving legal education and practice; supporting next generation of lawyers



TLEF 2017 funding partners

- AB Charitable Trust
- Allen & Overy
- Baring Foundation
- Burges Salmon
- City Bridge Trust
- Comic Relief
- Councils of the Inns of Court
- DAC Beachcroft
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- Eversheds Sutherland
- Gowlings WLG
- Herbert Smith Freehills
- Hogan Lovells
- Mills and Reeve
- Osborne Clarke
- Royal Bank of Scotland
- Shakespeare Martineau
- TLT
- Unbound Philanthropy

Objective 1

Understanding and using law

Total funding

£1,588,000

Grants

33

Average grant

£48k

Overview

The Foundation funds work that supports people of all ages to build broader legal knowledge and capability. Recognising when a problem has a law-related solution and having the confidence to seek legal help, means that chances to benefit from the law are not missed.

Use of digital technology has continued to be a strong strand running through this area of our programme this year. For example, we have helped organisations to explore the use of Skype to provide specialist advice in rural areas; and to explore the role of guided pathways to help navigate through particular legal processes. Our grant to Hasting-based charity seAp supported the organisation to develop a web-based tool to help people prepare for Employment Support Allowance and Personal Independence Payment assessments (see case study, page 09).

As part of the Foundation's growing focus on policy, we have funded a series of All-Party Parliamentary Groups covering: Rule of Law; Legal Aid; Public Legal Education; Pro Bono. All of these APPGs have been supported and encouraged to work together to coordinate their programmes. We are looking carefully at how to assess the impact of their work. The Rule of Law APPG, run by the Bingham Centre for Rule of Law, has played a key role in exploring the legal implications of the vote to leave the EU and has been the catalyst for a series of further discussions involving parliamentarians, academics and expert civil society organisations.



We are working hard to promote the need for court reform to be placed in the wider context of justice and rule of law.

Work under this strategic objective has also seen the development of a significant partnership programme led by The Baring Foundation, and with the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, helping non-legal voluntary organisations to use the law and human rights-based approaches. Now in its second year, the programme has funded work to help voluntary organisations understand how the law can be an effective tool to tackle discrimination and disadvantage.

The Foundation also recognises that having the capability to use the law inevitably has to involve tackling how the legal system itself can be more accessible, efficient and effective. Development of the online court offers great potential and we are working hard through a variety of channels to promote the need for court reform to be placed in the wider context of justice and the rule of law. We hope to draw from this process to increase our understanding of what works in helping people to secure just outcomes. As part of this, the Foundation participates in the Litigants in Person Engagement Group, chaired by Mr Justice Knowles, and involving officials from HM Courts and Tribunal Service, and sector organisations.

Objectives

1. Understanding and using law
2. Improving legal training and practice
3. Supporting next generation of lawyers

Case study: seAp

Creating a 'virtual advocacy' app

How a small local charity used funding from TLEF – together with cereal boxes, cake and 'hundreds of sticky notes' – to create an award-winning app which is helping disability claimants across the country.

Around 720,000 people each year apply for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), and another 400,000 will apply for Personal Independence Payments (PIP).

Many of them will find it a daunting, overwhelming process, says Liz Fenton, strategic service development manager at Hastings-based advocacy charity seAp.

'People tell us they feel as if their whole lives depend on that interview. They can get into a terrible state worrying beforehand, because they have heard horror stories in the press about the assessors getting it wrong and people losing all their benefits.'

The work capability assessment which is at the heart of the ESA process has been widely criticised. Some 40 per cent of ESA decisions are appealed; a third of them, successfully. While PIP has not been subject to such intense criticism, research has raised concerns about some decision making.

Inaccurate assessments are a problem for everyone: they lead to high numbers of appeals, which put additional strain on the assessment system; but also, crucially, for claimants, whose health and well being may deteriorate unnecessarily, if they are wrongly denied support.

seAp is an advocacy charity, which supports vulnerable people across the south of England, to ensure that their voices are heard in health and welfare-related decisions that affect them. It receives specific funding to provide support to people going through the medical assessment for disability benefits. In its experience, ESA and PIP applicants often need a particularly high level of guidance to steer them through the process and ensure they secure their rights.

seAp's advocates receive training in welfare benefits and can spend time with PIP and ESA clients, explaining how the application process works. They work with applicants to identify how their daily lives are affected by their disability, and tease out details which, although often difficult and distressing to talk about, are vital if an accurate assessment is to be made.

Pete O'Mant is one such advocate, seeing around 120 clients a year, many of them ESA or PIP applicants. 'I can spend an hour or two chatting over medications, problems, limitations, conditions, where they live, all that kind of stuff. Then I write it up so they've got it on a piece of paper, and I can go to the assessment with that person. This could all take four hours, six hours.'

It is an invaluable service, but one that seAp can only provide to clients with the highest needs, such as communication or mental health difficulties. Yet it was clear to the charity that many more ESA and PIP applicants would benefit from extra support.

Pete says: 'People kept using the same words, "I'm terrified"; or "I didn't sleep last night worrying"; or "I've been sick all morning before my assessment appointment." We also noticed that people were forgetting to mention important things during their assessments. They were getting too wound up before the interview to make notes or write down questions they wanted to ask. We knew we had to do something.'

It was then seAp decided to try to find a way of using digital technology to help ESA and PIP applicants prepare for their assessments, wherever they live, and on a much greater scale. ►

Objective 1 Understanding and using law

The result was c-App, a mobile enabled website providing 'virtual advocacy', which was launched in January 2016, after a year in development.

Liz explains how it works: 'The site starts out with basic questions, but then goes down several layers, so people can really understand what the assessor is looking for. When they say, "can you feed yourself?" People may say, "yes", but does that mean you can only eat takeaways? Does that mean you can only cook beans? Or, are you able to use a cooker or microwave? Are you able to walk across the kitchen holding a plate of food? It goes into a lot more detail, so that people can be really clear about the limitations on their lives.'

After completing the app process, users have the option to print out their assessment, which gives them a record of the key information. 'If there is a specific question they've answered which indicates that they are definitely entitled to the benefit, at the end, the app will flag that up, and say: "You must make sure the assessor knows x, y, and z."'

“

When we kept hearing people say they were 'terrified' about their benefits assessment, we realised we had to do something.

Funding for c-App

The award-winning c-App is an example of the way TLEF can work collaboratively, both with grantees and other funders, to provide flexible, responsive, practical and financial support at different stages, as a project evolves.

TLEF first met staff at seAp to discuss the initial idea for a 'virtual advocacy' app in early 2014.

TLEF went on to provide a grant of £61,000 in July 2014 for the development stage of the project.

It also helped seAp with the tender process, including introducing the charity to Neontribe, the web design company which ultimately won the bid after a competitive tendering process (in January 2015) and produced the app.

seAp then obtained a grant of £41,800 from Comic Relief which covered the cost of further development and refinement of the product.

c-App – which is technically a 'mobile responsive website' rather than an app – was launched to the public in February 2016.

TLEF made a further grant of £22,000 in 2017 to cover the cost of marketing and promoting c-App to other referral agencies and potential users, and for the project to be independently evaluated.

In October 2017, c-App won the Charity Times award for best use of technology.

Liz Fenton (left), who led the c-App project, shown here with seAp chief executive officer Marie Casey



Objective 1 Understanding and using law

Liz adds that, provided questions are answered correctly, the app's assessment is guaranteed to be accurate. 'It will tell clients the result they should get. If they get a different result after the actual interview, it's a good indication they should go to appeal.'

In its first eight months, c-App had 80,000 users, which enabled seAp to extend its client reach by 1,000 times, and equates to 5 per cent of the total number of people registering for PIP and ESA during that period. Detailed data analysis by seAp shows that 38,000 of those users found the app's information sections useful; 34,000 found being able to practise questions useful.

In October 2017, c-App won the Charity Times award for best use of IT, fending off competition from far bigger charities, like Age UK and the National Trust. 'It was brilliant to see everyone's teamwork recognised,' says Liz, who attended the ceremony to collect the award.

c-App's development involved a core team of 17 individuals from 11 different organisations (including TLEF), plus, crucially, detailed roadtesting by numerous clients.

Kevin Haith is a seAp client with a background in IT, so brought his own expertise when he was asked to roadtest c-App. He says: 'It was actually very helpful. More helpful than I thought. Being a bit of a techie at heart, I am always, "Well, why did they do that?" But I was very happy with it.'

Liz describes the development process – which was quite a departure for seAp – as 'exhilarating'. Nick Hopkins, the independent welfare benefits consultant who was brought in as project manager, confirms it was 'genuinely enjoyable'.

After a tender, Neontribe, a Norwich-based software developer founded 10 years ago, was selected to develop the app.

Neontribe's Harry Harrold says the company has done various 'tech for good' projects previously, but possibly none where the intended users were so vulnerable, or the stakes for them so high. As a general rule, the more vulnerable the client group, the more vital it is to have their input – but also the more care that needs to be taken in achieving this. ▶

Employment and Support Allowance

ESA replaces Incapacity Benefit and provides financial support for people having difficulty finding work because of a long term illness or disability. Applicants go through a work capability assessment, which determines whether they are eligible, and what level of support they qualify for.

Personal Independence Payment

PIP replaces the Disability Living Allowance, and helps with some of the extra costs caused by long term illness or disability. Applicants have to be assessed by a 'health professional' who determines what level of support they are entitled to.

80,000

c-App users in first 8 months

Neontribe's solution was to develop a series of 'personas' and 'scenarios', which enabled clients to feed in their own experiences, without the process becoming too personal. Harry explains: 'When you are speaking to people who have a vulnerability, as a professional, what you don't want to do is intrude into their lives. By creating fictional characters, you can get them to talk about their lived experiences in a way that isn't intrusive or insensitive. So, we made up characters who would represent the people that we are trying to help, and we put those personas in situations – and ideas came out the other end.'

Liz says there was no shortage of client volunteers, which was not just down to the copious amounts of cake Neontribe brought with them. 'The clients enjoyed it. They wanted to be part of it and to help extend something to other people that they've benefited from.'

Another technique Neontribe deployed was a 'cereal box pitch'. For this one, Harry and his colleagues arrived with cardboard boxes, glue, and marker pens, and instructions to everyone to design packaging for the product. What would it say on the box? How would you describe what it does? What are its key features?

It was, says Liz, a highly effective way of getting the team to focus on the essentials. They determined that the app must have the following features: free to the user; for individuals to use on their own behalf, or with the support of an advocate; anonymous, with no data stored anywhere (in case it was being used on a public computer); accurate; easy to use; independent; able to be used on a phone.

Before any coding was done, the designers created a paper version of how the programme would work, which was also roadtested by a dozen seAp clients. Liz says: 'Neontribe had a big piece of paper that's supposed to look like a computer screen, with hundreds of sticky notes, which show where you go to if you press a particular button. It means you can see how it all works.'

Nick says the reason the project worked so well was because everyone respected each other's – and their own – expertise. On any issues to do with clients, everyone deferred to Pete, because of his advocacy experience (and, indeed, the app is intended to replicate his 'tone of voice').

Nick says: 'You must retain control of the content because you will understand the importance of something that the IT guys won't. They need to encode the logic you give them.' But, he adds, it's equally important not to be precious about things that aren't vital. 'Don't hold on to something that's not worth holding on to.' Harry agrees: 'You need to listen to what's being said by the service users and the testers.'

seAp's starting point was that c-App users would be those who couldn't access face-to-face support, and they were surprised to learn that some clients preferred it. 'People who have used it have said in some ways, it's better than face to face advocacy: they could do it in the middle of the night, if that's the only time they felt well enough. They could stop and start whenever they wanted. They didn't have to travel.'

One client with lupus said it made the process less distressing. 'She said she spent all her time trying not to think about her illness and how it impacts on her and her family, so to be forced to sit there and tell someone all the things you can't do is very upsetting. Being able to do it at home and at her own pace, was better for her.'

seAp

seAp – which stands for support, empower, advocate, promote – is an independent charity, based in Hastings, East Sussex, which advocates for vulnerable people to ensure they have a voice in decisions that affect them. Its services are free and confidential. seAp provides advocacy to clients across the south of England, although its face-to-face disability advocacy service is restricted to people living in the Hastings area (for reasons to do with the terms of its funding for this service). With the launch of c-App, however, disability benefit applicants nationwide can benefit from seAp's expertise and support.

1. Understanding and using law
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3. Supporting next generation of lawyers

Grants 2017

Avon and Bristol Law Centre

£82,011

[Virtual Law Centre](#)

Developing a Skype-based service providing specialist legal advice by pro bono solicitors and barristers in Bristol to clients in rural areas of the south west; working in partnership with Citizens Advice North Somerset and Citizens Advice South Somerset.

Baring Foundation

£200,000

[Use of the Law by Voluntary Organisations: Phase 2](#)

Contributing to Baring Foundation's 'Strengthening the Voluntary Sector' programme which supports non-legal voluntary organisations to use law and human rights approaches to pursue their charitable purpose and amplify the law's everyday relevance by situating it within a wider framework for advocacy and social change.

Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law / British Institute of International and Comparative Law

£50,128

[All-Party Parliamentary Group](#)

Funding secretariat of All-Party Parliamentary Group on Rule of Law.

Citizenship Foundation

£60,000

[Advancement of Public Legal Education for Young People in Wales](#)

Developing understanding of current levels of PLE in schools, increasing the number of young people from economically disadvantaged areas taking part in the Magistrates Court and Bar Mock Trial Competitions and Lawyers in Schools programmes; promoting Citizenship Foundation's Law in Schools website.

Coroners Court Support Service

£15,400

[Online Platform to Support Bereaved Families and Witnesses Attending a Coroners Court Inquest](#)

Updating CCSS website to provide information and support for bereaved families and witnesses attending a Coroners Court inquest; providing an interactive secure space for CCSS volunteers to share experiences, offer advice and support peers.

Disability Law Service

£20,000

[Scoping Study to Assess Viability of Online Guided Pathway Covering the Law in Relation to Reasonable Adjustments](#)

Carrying out a scoping study for delivering free online guided pathway system to increase access to legal advice for disabled people; supporting disabled people to find and keep jobs.



Disability Rights UK

£98,000

[The Right to Participate](#)

Creating an interactive guide to increase disabled people's understanding of legal rights, combining new technology with best practice for framing rights-based messages; supporting disabled people to use the law to address barriers.

Ethical Property Foundation

£30,000

[Online Education service for Small and Local Charities](#)

Providing practical, jargon-free training and advice on all aspects of law relating to charities' owning, renting or managing a property.

Global Dialogue

£7,500

[Early Action Funders Alliance](#)

Supporting costs of the secretariat of the Early Action Funders Alliance, set up to promote principles and practice of early action among funders.

Objectives

1. Understanding and using law
2. Improving legal training and practice
3. Supporting next generation of lawyers

Funding tools

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Research and learning

Law, policy and regulation

Communications

Information technology

Financial summary

People

Justice**£91,287****Strengthening 21st Century Access to Justice**

Ensuring reforms to courts and tribunals respond to needs of court users, particularly online justice systems; developing approaches to 'assisted digital'.

Law for Life**£50,000****Online Income Generation Capacity Building Pilot**

Developing and piloting a model for generating revenue by offering expanded free public legal education content alongside fee paying content on the AdviceNow website.

LawWorks (Solicitors Pro Bono Group)**£21,131****All-Party Parliamentary Groups**

Providing secretariat and support services for the All-Party Parliamentary Groups on Public Legal Education and Pro Bono. (Grant transferred from Legal Action Group.)

Legal Action Group**£29,680****Phase 1: Replacing Basic IT Systems**

Supporting the replacement of basic IT infrastructure, including new accounts package and customer relationship management.

Legal Action Group**£8,025****Digital Publishing: Further Support**

Supporting implementation of LAG's digital publishing strategy.

Legal Action Group**£12,679****All-Party Parliamentary Groups**

Funding secretariat of All-Party Parliamentary Groups on Public Legal Education and Pro Bono. (Grant subsequently transferred to LawWorks.)

Legal Advice Centre (University House)**£3,900****Falmouth and Plymouth Skype Advice Clinics**

Scoping a project to use Skype to provide free legal advice remotely, through collaboration between University House Legal Advice Centre (east London) and community centres in Falmouth and Plymouth.

Legal Aid Practitioners Group**£30,000****Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year Award – Access to Justice through IT Award**

Recognising and encouraging potential role of digital technology to address legal needs by sponsoring award at the Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards over three years.

Legal Aid Practitioners Group**£53,596****Raising Awareness of Legal Aid (APPG Plus)**

Funding secretariat of All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid.

LGBT Consortium**£14,460****LGBT Legal Matters**

Researching development of training materials to support LGBT organisations to use the law in delivery of their charitable objectives.

Maternity Action**£57,450****Delivering Maternity Rights Information through Apps and Email-based Notification**

Producing written and video materials for pregnant women on maternity rights at work, to be delivered through pregnancy-related apps and email notification services.

Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland**£15,000****Patients' Rights Care Pathway**

Disseminating a toolkit to help patients and carers to better understand their human rights in inpatient mental health settings.

National Family Mediation

£195,500

Management of Mediation Online Implementation

Upgrading NFM's case-management systems: increasing capacity and efficiency; enabling clients to manage paperwork online; streamlining processes for admin staff and mediators.

Pascoe Pleasence Limited

£12,000

Dissemination of Scale Development Project

Preparing a publication on the results of research to develop standardised measures for legal capability, for submission to a high impact academic journal.

Prisoners' Advice Service

£7,460

Top-up for Prisoners' Toolkits

Testing usability and appropriateness of PAS Prison Law toolkits produced with support of a previous TLEF grant.

Relate

£15,978

Online Dispute Resolution in Family Disputes in England and Wales: Lessons from our Pilot

Disseminating lessons from project to develop a prototype Online Family Dispute Resolution service, with a focus on findings relating to service users, practitioner involvement, service sustainability, and remaining innovation gaps in these areas.

RightsInfo

£180,000

RightsInfo News Service

Establishing RightsInfo News Service, to react to breaking news stories with legally accurate, engaging and plain-English comment.

seAp

£22,000

c-App: Promotion and Uptake

Rolling out a dedicated strategic marketing project to increase awareness and drive adoption of c-App, ensuring maximised reach (see case study, page 09).

Sisters For Change

£50,000

The Power of Law in her Hands: Building the Legal Capacity of England's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Women's Sector

Delivering legal education and capacity building programme to support BAME women's organisations to use the law to achieve better social outcomes for women victims of violence; gathering evidence to identify gaps in responses of public authorities to violence against BAME women; engaging MPs and public officials about the legal obligations of public authorities.

Society for Computers and Law

£2,500

Online Courts Hackathon

Supporting participation of law students in hackathon to develop designs, solutions, systems and technologies for the online courts.



University of Leicester

£19,006

Law in Children's Lives: Secondary Analysis

Undertaking secondary analysis of data gathered as part of the research project 'Law in Children's Lives', which used a tablet-based game to explore legal understanding of children aged 8-11.

University of Nottingham

£57,600

Scoping Study

Carrying out a scoping study into children and young people's understanding of their legal rights as suspects.

Your Employment Settlement Service

£26,000

R2R: Route to Resolution

Preparing business plan for establishing an interactive guided pathway website for employees providing a one-stop-shop workplace alternative dispute resolution service.

- 1. Understanding and using law
- 2. Improving legal training and practice
- 3. Supporting next generation of lawyers

Objective 2

Improving legal training and practice

Total funding

£1,933,000

Grants

35

Average grant

£55k

Objective 2 Improving legal training and practice

Overview

The Foundation funds work to make legal training and practice more effective, with a particular focus on work that can become sustainable and be delivered at scale.

First and foremost, this involves training for lawyers and those in legal services, to improve technical legal skills and expertise. Areas of law covered by our grants include: community care, debt, disability discrimination, domestic violence, equality, family, housing, human rights, immigration, refugee and family reunion, welfare benefits and tax credits, and youth justice. As with other objectives, information technology plays a key role across this work, with projects exploring the use of online training and publications, video, online communications, and guided pathways.



Future Advice helped to create the space for organisations to experiment and develop their ideas for new approaches to delivery and funding at a time when they faced increased pressures on everyday service delivery.

Importantly, this objective also includes work to improve the wider organisational development skills needed in order to run effective and sustainable legal services. Much of this work builds on previous funding via the Future Advice programme. Future Advice was a collaboration, instigated by the Baring Foundation in partnership with Unbound Philanthropy, Comic Relief and The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund. The Legal Education Foundation joined the partnership in 2013. From 2011 to 2017, the programme awarded 66 grants and funded consultancy support and learning events to the value of over £3m.

This year, the funders commissioned Hidden Depths Research to carry out an independent review of the programme, focusing on grants relating to attracting income, making the most effective use of resources and strengthening advice organisations through organisational development and support. The principal conclusion was that Future Advice helped to create the space for organisations to experiment and develop their ideas for new approaches to delivery and funding at a time when they faced increased pressures on everyday service

delivery. The programme helped legal advice to reach more people than would have otherwise been the case, and it funded work that would not have occurred otherwise, especially with respect to supporting organisations through change.

A strong theme of the Future Advice work, which the Foundation is now developing further in a range of ways, is the value of embedding legal services in new places and of expanding partnerships with non-legal organisations. One example is work with health practitioners. Grants this year to UCL Centre for Access to Justice, homelessness organisation Groundswell and St Oswald's Hospice, and development work in Suffolk, are addressing different aspects of research and practice.

This objective also encompasses grants relating to Brexit, where the Foundation is supporting expert civil society organisations to engage with the process. This is discussed in more detail in the section on law, policy and regulation on page 35.

Objectives

1. Understanding and using law
2. Improving legal training and practice
3. Supporting next generation of lawyers

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Case study:

Street Legal

Joining forces to break the cycle of rough sleeping

An innovative pilot project, bringing together homelessness and immigration charities, was given a development grant by TLEF in 2014. Three years later, having secured significant additional funding, it has now been rolled out across London.

For most sixth formers, waiting for their A-level results is all the stress they need. For Roxanna, her exam grades were the least of her worries. Not long before she began her A-level courses, she and her mum found themselves homeless. They were to spend three years 'jumping from home to home', constantly on the move – and eventually ending up street homeless.

It was only thanks to the intervention of Street Legal, an innovative project set up by Praxis Community Projects, St Mungo's, and Refugee Action, that they have now been able to get a roof over their head again.

Before they lost their home, Roxanna's life had seemed fairly unremarkable. Her mum was a secondary school teacher, paying a mortgage on the house where they'd lived since Roxanna was 8. They had come to the UK from Jamaica when Roxanna was age 5. Roxanna explains: 'They were recruiting teachers here in the early 2000s. So my mum got a visa and flew over, without much hassle. Because I was her daughter, I came along.'

Although they had arrived in the UK legally, at some point over the years, her mum's visa had expired. She should have taken steps to renew their status but, for reasons Roxanna doesn't understand, didn't do so. If they'd had expert legal advice, they could have regularised their status; without it, they had become what are known as 'overstayers'. The longer the situation went on, the more convinced Roxanna's mum became that it was too risky to seek legal advice. Even when their home was under threat, she was still heeding warnings from 'so-called friends' to stay silent. Roxanna says: 'She was told not to go to the government because they would deport us,

and that put fear into her. So we just jumped from home to home for the next three years until I finished college.'

At one point Roxanna had tried to resolve matters herself. Although still only 16, she went alone to Citizens Advice to explain her situation. The advice was positive: as she was under 18 and had been in the UK so long, she would almost certainly qualify for leave to remain. The stumbling block was that the application fee was far beyond her reach. 'I didn't have the £1,000 or whatever it would cost. So, to be honest, I just left it at that.'

The lack of resolution took its toll. She says: 'I was really depressed. For three years, it was just non-stop. Literally, my whole life, I couldn't progress, couldn't go to uni, couldn't go out with my friends. I couldn't socialise because there was always this bigger thing in the back of my mind.'

Roxanna's situation made her feel isolated, but she is far from alone. ▶

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Before they lost their home, her mum was a secondary school teacher, paying a mortgage on the house where they'd lived since Roxanna was 8.

According to Praxis chief executive Sally Daghljan, there are an estimated 120,000 young people in London facing similar issues. Many will have no idea that, like Roxanna, they are undocumented. Indeed, for most of Roxanna's school years, she had no reason to think she was any different from the rest of her schoolmates. A self-confessed 'homebody', she had a small group of close friends, and applied herself to her studies, getting nine GCSEs. The first she had any inkling of future problems was aged 14, when she was desperate to go on a school trip to France. 'I really wanted to go with my friends to another country, and that's when I found that my passport still had my 5-year-old face on it. It was a big chunk of expired passport!' She was disappointed not to be able to go on the trip, but still had no idea what the implications of her long out-of-date Jamaican passport might be.

Soon afterwards, however, things started to spiral downwards. Her mum lost her job and couldn't get another one because she didn't have the right paperwork. Her mum tried to support them both through car boot sales and some private tuition, but it wasn't enough. 'My mum couldn't afford the mortgage of nearly £2,000 a month. So everything was building, like a domino effect.'

Eventually, the house was repossessed. Roxanna, now 20, counts up the number of times they moved during the next three years, before arriving at the figure eight. The longest they stayed anywhere was a few months; the shortest, a couple of weeks. 'It was mainly with my mum's friends. She would tell them, "We are

in a situation and we need somewhere to stay for a couple of weeks." We would have to pay them rent. After a while it would start to become awkward and upsetting and we would then just move on to another place.'

Once they stayed with an acquaintance Roxanna's mum had met through her bootsales. He was also from Jamaica and wanted to help. When they moved in, it became clear he expected a sexual relationship with her mother in exchange, so they left rapidly. Another time, her mum agreed to clean in lieu of rent. The house was full of cockroaches and mould, and the owner had two sons that Roxanna describes as 'unstable'. 'That situation became hostile as well, so we left.'

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After three years they ran out of options. They were picked up from a busstop by a homelessness charity. They were at their lowest ebb, but it was to be a turning point.

Sally Daghljan says the problems Roxanna faced are familiar. Lack of timely, expert advice, the rising cost of an immigration application, together with the removal of legal aid for most immigration cases means fewer people are able to resolve their status, leading to an increase in the numbers becoming destitute.

For Roxanna and her mum, destitution came after three years and eight moves, when they finally ran out of options. A homelessness outreach worker picked them up from a busstop and took them to a No Second Night Out hub, run by the charity St Mungo's. They were at their lowest ebb, but, thanks to Street Legal, it was to prove to be a turning point.

Within days of arriving at the hub, things started to happen. Roxanna saw an immigration adviser, seconded to the hub from Praxis. The adviser confirmed what Citizens Advice had told Roxanna years earlier: she had a strong case. What was different this time was that Street Legal would pay the cost of her £993 application fee, and the £500 NHS surcharge (without which she would have no entitlement to free healthcare).

Roxanna recalls: 'It was good to hear her say that I would be successful. That gave me more hope.' The first step was to get hold of Roxanna's birth certificate, so she could apply for a new Jamaican passport. Once she had that, the next step would be to put in an application for leave to remain in the UK. The hub helped out in more immediate ways, also. 'They were really good because they said anything you need, just tell us. They can do clothes, shoes, personal hygiene stuff.' ▶

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After years of feeling there was nothing to do but sit and wait, Roxanna was galvanised into action. 'I had become kind of like a slouch, a sloth, where I wasn't motivated. I would sit around and do nothing because my education was finished; all my friends lived far away.' Now, she needed to amass evidence to prove to the Home Office all the years she had lived in the UK. She set about contacting her former GPs and the schools she had attended. The handful of friends she had confided in about her situation also wrote letters in support, saying how long they'd known her.

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For the first time in many years, thanks to Street Legal, they now have their own bedroom, a bathroom and a kitchen.

Moving to the hub was the catalyst for Roxanna getting constructive help, but it was not an easy environment for someone so young. Hubs are intended to be a temporary staging post, and so have few home comforts. There are no beds or bedrooms. Men and women slept separately, but men far outnumbered women. Everyone had to provide not just their own bedding but improvise their own beds, out of blankets, camping equipment, whatever they could provide for themselves. There were a few office-type chairs, and if Roxanna was quick enough off the mark of an evening, she might be able to nab three of them before anyone else did, and put them together to sleep on.

As often as they could, the onsite support workers would arrange for Roxanna to spend nights away from the hub. A number of times, she slept in people's spare rooms, as part of a charity scheme where householders offer a bed for the night to a young homeless person. Roxanna would be given an address and then turn up at the house (her mum had to stay at the hub). She had to arrive by 6pm, would be given a meal, and then have to be on her way by 8am the following morning. All her hosts were, she says, 'very nice', but the strangeness of the situation wasn't lost on her. 'It was always kind of awkward. You don't know how to behave. You don't know what to say after a certain point. It's like "Hi! My name's Roxanna. Nice to meet you." And then, what?'

She was still at the hub when her A-level results came out. Unsurprisingly, her grades weren't great. A few months later, she and her mum were moved to a hotel in west London. No more sleeping on chairs. They had a bedroom, 'with two proper beds', and their own bathroom, 'so it was like luxury'.

After a year there, they were moved again, this time to an apartment. For the first time in many years, they each had their own bedroom, a bathroom and a kitchen. It's likely they'll be moved again before long, but hopefully the end is in sight, thanks to the all-around support provided by Street Legal.

Praxis' adviser sent Roxanna's application with all the necessary evidence to the Home Office in 2016. After a wait of several months, in early 2017, she was granted leave to remain. Roxanna says: 'Now that I've got my status, I just want to forget the past three years and start afresh.'

She's not completely out of the woods, though. Leave to remain has to be renewed every two and a half years, and it will be 10 years before Roxanna can qualify for permanent status. Unsurprisingly, she was keen to make up for lost time, and rapidly found a job as a waitress at an events company. It only pays the minimum wage, and she'd like to set her sights higher. 'I wish I had thought of setting up job interviews before I got my card. You just want to hit the ground and start running. I want to start working and earning money because two and a half years is not a lot of time to save the money to apply again.'

Roxanna also plans to apply to university. She's interested in forensic science and would like to work in crime scene investigation.

She says: 'Career wise, I'd like to work for the government, because that's just a stable job.'

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Objective 2 Improving legal training and practice

The Street Legal model

Rough sleepers can be a difficult group for legal advisers to reach, for obvious reasons. Yet with the right legal advice, many people sleeping on the streets could find a way back into housing and out of social exclusion. A growing number of people end up homeless because of problems with their immigration status. Some will be refugees or asylum-seekers, who had fled to the UK for safety. Others will be like Roxanna and her mum, who have been living in the UK for many years, but either fail to renew their status or cannot prove their status because of missing documents.

Without immigration status, people are unable to work or claim any form of state support, and many end up destitute. The key to ending their destitution is to resolve their immigration situation – yet most homeless charities aren't set up to advise in this complex and highly regulated area of law, so little help is available. Street Legal – which was set up by Praxis Community Projects, St Mungo's and Refugee Action – was launched to bridge that gap by providing a collaborative and innovative service.

With financial support from the Homelessness Transition Fund, two successful Street Legal pilots supporting destitute non-EU migrants were run in east and west London, from 2012 to 2015. The project was aimed at non-EU migrants, as their cases are generally the hardest to resolve and they had the least support available – although recent changes mean EU migrants will increasingly need this kind of support as well.

In February 2015, TLEF awarded a £62,000 grant to cover the cost of further developing the Street Legal model so it could be rolled out more widely. Following this work, Street Legal successfully applied for a £500,000 grant from the Big Lottery Fund, and a three-year London-wide project began in July 2016.

Street Legal believes its model of providing all around support is unique. It links rough sleepers with outreach workers, emergency accommodation providers, and accredited immigration advisors. These services work together to offer clients a way out of rough sleeping, by sorting out their immigration status, while giving them somewhere to live in the meantime. It is difficult for anyone living on the streets to gather the evidence they will need to make a successful immigration application, so Street Legal also aims to

provide longer term accommodation, and has recently persuaded the Greater London Authority to fund some beds for this group.

In London, access to Street Legal is available to rough sleepers who have been referred by outreach workers, as was the case for Roxanna and her mum. Once they are in the hub and away from the streets, clients are referred to accredited immigration advisers. These legal advisers work in partnership with frontline homelessness support staff.

Once their status is resolved, in some cases clients are eligible for state support and able to work. In Roxanna's case, she is allowed to work but the Home Office imposed a 'no recourse to public funds' condition when it granted her status, which means she cannot claim housing or other benefits. A legal adviser can make an application for this condition to be lifted, but the process takes many months, during which Roxanna has no access to the welfare safety net – hence the importance of a project like Street Legal to keep her and others like her afloat.

Sally Daghliah (front) and her colleagues at Praxis, are part of the collaborative Street Legal project



Grants 2017

Avon and Bristol Law Centre

£10,000

[Virtual Law Centre – South West](#)

Developing a model for a virtual Law Centre for the south west to learn about the role of technology in improving access to specialist legal advice; harnessing pro bono input from the Bristol legal sector and law students.

Bar Pro Bono Unit

£70,200

[Digitally Futureproofing Bar Pro Bono Unit](#)

Creating an easy-to-use guided process for applicants and referrers; linking volunteer barristers with applicants more quickly and effectively.

Cambridge House

£21,978

[Safer Renting](#)

Developing specialist training programme in landlord / tenant and housing law to drive efforts to tackle homelessness and support vulnerable private renters.



Central England Law Centre

£10,000

[Kids in Need of Defence – IT Strategy](#)

Supporting development work on establishing Kids in Need of Defence UK, in particular to explore the role of technology and to build a systems map; and a specification for technology support to attract further investment.

Child Poverty Action Group

£21,300

[Ask CPAG: Access to Justice through Technology for Social Security Claimants](#)

Providing legal advisers with comprehensive online resources to navigate welfare reforms; expanding content of online resource 'Ask CPAG', including introducing guided pathways and automated production of letters to challenge decisions; redeveloping the online versions of CPAG's 'Welfare Benefits and Tax Credits Handbook' and 'Welfare Rights Bulletin'.

Children's Legal Centre (Swansea University)

£5,000

[Digital Delivery of the Children's Legal Centre \(Wales\)](#)

Supporting scoping work on the development of a digital delivery strategy for CLC in Wales.

Disability Rights UK

£9,550

[Implications of Brexit for Disability Rights](#)

Producing a research paper examining possible impact of Brexit on disabled people's rights.

Electronic Immigration Network

£8,500

[Best Practice Guide on Asylum and Human Rights Appeals](#)

Updating the best practice guide following significant changes to legislation, policy and case law.

Free Representation Unit

£50,000

[Taking Advantage of Digital](#)

First phase of project to upgrade all aspects of FRU's IT infrastructure and software to improve access to justice for those with unmet legal needs.

Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit

£30,000

Future Advice: Refugee Family Reunion

Scaling up and sharing successful model developed by GMIAU to help refugees make family reunion applications, bringing about improvements in reception and treatment of refugees.

Greater Manchester Law Centre

£75,000

A Community Law Centre for Manchester

Supporting new Greater Manchester Law Centre to develop sustainable sources of income.

Groundswell

£38,000

Building Livelihoods: Supporting Homeless People to Overcome Legal Barriers and Build Healthy and Sustainable Lives.

Testing a new approach to integrating provision of legal advice into homelessness services.

Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality

£32,000

Suffolk Law Centre

Supporting the creation of a new Law Centre in Ipswich, serving clients in Suffolk and focusing initially on housing, asylum and public law advice services.

Islington Law Centre

£15,000

Immigration Capacity Building

Developing sustainable model for provision of immigration advice in low-income communities.

Just for Kids Law

£100,000

Youth Justice Legal Centre

Supporting further development of YJLC as centre of excellence on youth justice issues in England and Wales; carrying out policy work to ensure youth justice becomes a legal specialism; developing website providing comprehensive information, legal resources and best practice guides; delivering training for lawyers and non-legal professionals working with children; providing free specialist advice for children, youth offending teams, the judiciary and lawyers.

JustRight Scotland

£85,000

Development of Collaborative Social Justice Model

Establishing collaborative model to develop role of early legal advice, strategic legal interventions and legal education in social justice; working with British Red Cross.

Law Centres Network

£1,500

Replacement of IT Equipment for North Kensington Law Centre

Replacing IT equipment to enable the Law Centre to establish a mobile office following the Grenfell Tower fire.

Law Centres Network

£26,385

Law Centre Training Programme Year 3

Funding the third year of a three-year project to establish a self-financing and ongoing training programme for Law Centres and other specialist legal organisations.



Law Centres Network

£88,130

Law Centres 2020 Digital Vision Phase 1 Revision

Completing phase 1 of a project to upgrade digital infrastructure of Law Centres, in readiness for online courts; improving client and office administration; assisting clients with digital tools; collecting robust data on advice needs and on the impact of Law Centres' work.

Law Centres Network

£186,000

Law Centres 2020 Digital Vision

Further contribution to project to upgrade digital infrastructure of Law Centres.

Legal Action Group

£86,400

LAG Digital First Strategy: Phase 2

Implementing second phase of LAG's digital strategy to enable content from LAG's books, Legal Action journal and Community Care Law Reports to be made available through a new website and to facilitate sales of content on a subscription basis.

Legal Aid Practitioners Group

£22,000

Future Advice: LAPG Practice Management, Leadership and Innovation Development programme: Phase 1

Supporting development of training for managers and chief executives of legal advice organisations leading to a Certificate in Practice Management. Course materials draw from resources and lessons arising out of the projects funded by the Future Advice programme.

Legal Aid Practitioners Group

£33,000

Future Advice: Encouraging Innovation Through Effective Management

Facilitating involvement of not-for-profit advice providers in the LAPG Certificate in Practice Management course by subsidising costs of attending; commissioning an independent exercise to capture lessons on how participants put their training into action.

Legal Aid Practitioners Group

£91,000

Future Advice: Supporting Effective Management

Developing programme of workshops to support effective management and innovation in not-for-profit advice providers, drawing particularly on lessons generated by the Future Advice grants programme. Workshops will be supported by online materials and resources. NfP agencies will be supported to attend workshops and research will be done to capture how participants put training into practice.

Liberty

£100,000

Legal Mapping and Research Project to Produce a Strong, Non-partisan Analysis of Legal Implications of Brexit

Carrying out mapping research and analysis on the legal implications of the UK's withdrawal from the EU from a human rights and equalities perspective.

Migrants Resource Centre (Asylum Aid)

£20,000

Future Advice: Making the Merger Work – Diversifying Income

Facilitating merger of Migrants Resource Centre and Asylum Aid by funding work to diversify the new organisation's income beyond existing sources of legal aid and grants.



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Objective 2 Improving legal training and practice

Pro Bono Community

£30,000

Legal Volunteers Training Programme

Producing new training programmes for legal volunteers in family, debt and domestic violence; gaining accreditation from City Law School; developing online volunteer monitoring and evaluation interface; and expanding PBC's courses to new regions.

Public Law Project

£70,000

Future Advice: Public Law Project

Supporting investment in PLP's infrastructure; continuing working towards securing long-term sustainability.

Public Law Project

£60,000

Brexit – Rule of Law

Engaging with parliamentary law-making and law reform processes arising from Brexit through working with other civil society groups; producing publications and briefings; providing training to build PLP's internal capacity; understanding and gathering insights to inform PLP's casework strategy.

Refugee Action

£50,000

Future Advice: Increasing Access to Immigration and Asylum Advice

Supporting Refugee Advice Training Project to improve access to OISC-accredited advisers for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

Refugee Action

£80,000

Frontline Immigration Advice Project: Increasing Access to Immigration Advice for Migrants

Developing capability of local advice organisations to deliver immigration advice through training and professional development in line with OISC requirements. Includes developing an e-learning platform, including podcasts, webchat coaching and access to training materials.

Scottish Refugee Council

£45,000

Protecting and Enhancing Refugee Rights in the Brexit Process in Scotland

Producing legal policy analysis on impact of Brexit on rights for refugees, in collaboration with specialist legal organisations, academics and government.

St Oswald's Hospice

£89,811

Meeting Legal Needs of Adults with Life Limiting Illness

Carrying out a study on the breadth and impact of legal needs faced by patients with life-limiting illnesses and their carers; developing an educational intervention to address these needs.

UCL Centre for Access to Justice

£65,000

The Value of Health-Justice Partnerships – Research on Outcomes, Implementation and Future Directions

Supporting activities to integrate health and legal services including collecting data on the association between legal advice and wellbeing; holding a workshop in winter 2017 to engage health-policy decision-makers; carrying out feasibility study on potential for a national centre to promote best practice; evaluation to support policy development in this area.

University of Oxford, Faculty of Law

£197,515

Access to Civil Justice Research Project

Funding a three-year post-doctoral research fellowship, conducting research on access to justice in England and Wales, based at the new Bonavero Institute for Human Rights in the Faculty of Law at the University of Oxford.



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Objective 3

Supporting next generation of lawyers

Total funding:

£1,517,000

Grants:

23

Average grant

£66k

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Objective 3 Supporting next generation of lawyers

Overview

The Foundation recognises the importance of bringing through a new generation of talented and committed lawyers into the legal sector, particularly in ways that support diversity and promote social mobility.

We have continued to support the Pathways to Law programme, in partnership with the Sutton Trust, which this year celebrates its 10th anniversary. The scheme was launched in 2007 to encourage and support young people from less advantaged backgrounds to consider a career in the law. It is now managed by the Sutton Trust and this next phase is aiming to recruit 1,800 students over four years, expand the number of universities taking part, and widen the number of organisations offering work experience. The Sutton Trust is working with the Bridge Group to produce longitudinal data on the impact of the scheme on access to studying the law at university and to employment in the legal sector.

The Foundation is also supporting the next generation through our Justice First Fellowship. The scheme is a response to our concern over access to specialist advice services in social welfare law. This part of the legal sector has experienced enormous pressure on resources, at the same time as seeing a rise in demand for its services.

In order to qualify as a solicitor, lawyers have to complete a work-based training contract, usually over two years, involving a range of areas of law and skills development. One consequence of the pressures acting on the social welfare law sector has been the virtual collapse in its ability to offer training contracts. This has reduced the availability of advice to vulnerable people in the short term and, in the longer term, poses a serious question over the creation of the next generation of specialists.



We cannot ignore the risk that lawyers of high talent, a sense of social justice, and moral commitment may not be able to train in the areas of social welfare law where help is so desperately needed and on such a wide scale.

The Foundation saw the need for a scheme that would help aspiring social justice lawyers to qualify, to develop the skills to establish sustainable careers in this area of law, and to become future leaders of the sector. Timothy Dutton QC, governor of the Foundation, summed it up, by saying: 'We cannot ignore the risk that lawyers of high talent, a sense of social justice, and moral commitment may not be able to train in the areas of social welfare law where help is so desperately needed and on such a wide scale.'

This year, our first cohort of eight Fellows completed their fellowship and are now qualified lawyers. They have all gone on to secure jobs as solicitors: five in their original host organisation, and three moving to new employers, two in public law specialist organisations, and the other at a private law firm specialising in employment law. Future employment prospects for the second round of Fellows completing in January 2018 look promising. The total number of Fellows has now reached 34 across all four countries of the UK. Plans are already underway to pass the milestone of 50 Fellows in 2017-18.

Case study:

Justice First Fellowship

Being part of something bigger

Two Fellows at Greater Manchester Immigration Aid unit are now qualified solicitors. What impact has being part of TLEF's flagship scheme had on their careers and the organisation they work for?

When Melissa Darnbrough saw the advertisement for the Justice First Fellowship scheme, it wasn't something she thought she wanted to do. It was something *she knew she needed to do*.

At the time, Melissa was doing litigation for a specialised debt recovery law firm, while nursing a fierce ambition to qualify as a social welfare lawyer. She had completed a part-time law degree and legal practice course, but the shortage of legal aid training contracts meant she was resigned to having to train in the commercial sector, and then trying to move into social welfare law after qualification.

She recalls: 'When I saw the Justice First Fellowship ad, I thought: *I need to do that. That's what I need to do.* There were hosts all around the country, and one in Manchester, which was amazing. So I spent about a week and a half doing the application, and crossed my fingers.'

Her efforts paid off, and in 2014 she was offered a trainee solicitor post at Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit, as part of the Justice First Fellowship scheme.

In addition to Melissa, with TLEF's agreement, GMIAU was also able to offer a Fellowship post to a valued long-standing employee, Nadia Hussain. Nadia was a level two immigration case worker, and had completed her legal practice course in 2008, just when, thanks to the economic downturn, there were 'absolutely no' legal aid training contracts to be had. Since then, Nadia had all but given up on being able to go on to qualify. 'I couldn't see myself in a commercial setting. I just didn't fancy that kind of work. So I was happy to do immigration case work simply because I really enjoy it, and I never thought that I would qualify as a social welfare lawyer, honestly.'

Nadia was, she says, 'ecstatic' to be selected for the Fellowship, after Denise suggested that she should apply. 'I wasn't expecting it at all.'

Both Melissa and Nadia have flourished in their roles. In January 2017, they became part of the first cohort of Fellows to graduate from the scheme and qualify as solicitors.

GMIAU director Denise McDowell says, without the scheme, her organisation would not be able to take on one trainee, let alone two. 'No! Nowhere near. We would never have been able to afford it.'

She adds that the scheme is not just an opportunity for the Fellows, but also for the host organisations. She describes the Fellowship as 'an incredible gift', 'like gold'. GMIAU has had trainees previously, when the then Legal Services Commission used to fund places, but with the demise of that scheme, it thought its training contract days were over. Denise says: 'To get a funded training contract, which also covers the cost of supervising the trainee, is just extraordinary.' ▶

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It's an amazing opportunity both for the trainees, but also for the host organisation itself.

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She adds that the value of the scheme to GMIAU goes way beyond just the financial. GMIAU was 'honoured' to be chosen as one of the first host organisations and says being part of the scheme has had a wider effect. 'We had been in survival mode for the past few years, very much looking internally and just trying to keep going. The Fellowship scheme was just like this incredible gift and all of us recognised it for what it was. It has given us confidence to know that others see our abilities, and believe that we can deliver on what is a very high profile scheme.'

GMIAU acts for clients throughout the north west, from its offices in Crumpsall, an ethnically diverse area of north Manchester with high levels of poverty. Thanks to being a Fellowship host, it now feels part of a nationwide network of like-minded organisations. Denise says: 'I think it's given us a connectedness. We all have something in common, which is having a Fellow. We've all met each other, and I feel I could just contact one of the other hosts now easily, when I wouldn't necessarily even have known who they were before. I also think it's given us a profile and put us on a national map in a way that we probably wouldn't have, ordinarily.'

The Fellowship scheme aims not just to create social welfare lawyers, but future leaders of the profession. To this end, Fellows receive additional training in skills like fundraising, communications and business planning, and their supervisors are also invited to attend these days.

Denise accepts that the scheme puts demands on its hosts, but adds: 'You have got to be prepared to put the work in, and you will get great rewards back.'

Fellows are also expected to design and run their own projects, aimed at increasing access to justice. For theirs, Nadia and Melissa have set up a service offering immigration advice to prisoners who are subject to immigration control and facing deportation. Between the pair of them, they have advised around 40 people across nine prisons in the north-west.

Melissa admits that, initially, the idea of being a Fellow felt daunting. 'If I'm honest, when I first started I felt very small in a very big arena. But it gives you loads of confidence that you have these amazing people rooting for you, who just want you to do well.'

For her, the most useful additional training was about fundraising, which involved making a dummy pitch to a real grant funder. 'A lot of the work that we do is funded by grants, and that's something Denise has to do all the time to stay afloat. The pitch was really interesting for me, because I have never been involved in that side of things. It was good to have the feedback of an actual funder and hear what they are looking for.'

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It gives you loads of confidence to have these people rooting for you and trying to make you this future leader.

Nadia agrees. 'A lot of the support we had over the two years was around commercial awareness, fundraising, management, and things you wouldn't get with a normal training contract. These are really useful skills to have, which you don't get if you are a lawyer in a traditional law firm.'

Denise says it benefits her, as director of GMIAU, to have legal colleagues who have the wider perspective that being a Fellow brings.

'One of the dangers of the law, speaking as a non-lawyer, is that lawyers focus on the detail of the law, and policies and procedures, and don't easily look up and see beyond that. When we try to have those conversations, it's harder I think with lawyers than with people who have worked in more flexible ways. That is a very broad statement, but I think with both Melissa and Nadia, being part of the scheme has given them that sense of a bigger picture.' ▶

Denise McDowell



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Objective 3 Supporting next generation of lawyers

Melissa echoes that sentiment, and says that wider perspective has filtered through to her client work.

'One of the reasons why I think this Fellowship is so good is because it's given us that platform, the tools, to really try and effect change or to challenge injustices, which we see all of the time.'

Melissa does a significant amount of immigration work involving domestic violence. Inevitably, most of her clients are women. Male victims are much rarer, but Melissa has seen enough of them to notice that the Home Office tends to reject their claims, when a woman making an application presenting the same evidence would be accepted.

She says: 'When a man comes through with a very similar set of circumstances and the same if not more evidence, that application isn't going to have the same success rate as one for a woman. So, we identified that the policy for domestic violence doesn't really incorporate what evidence that you would require for emotional and psychological abuse which it appears men tend to suffer more from.'

Melissa is now aiming to challenge government policy in this area.

She has surprised even herself to be thinking in such bold terms, so early in her legal career. 'The Fellowship has given me a different drive that even I didn't know was there before I started.' She contrasts the work she is doing now with what her career might have been like if she'd stayed in the commercial sector. 'It would just be you trying to make yourself a partner, with no one really interested in you, other than what money you bill.' ►

Creating future leaders

From nine Fellows in eight host organisations when it was launched in 2014, the Justice First Fellowship has grown to the point where, by 2018, it will have recruited 51 Fellows to 40 not-for-profit agencies, legal aid firms and barristers chambers, across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Planning for a further recruitment round in 2019 is already underway. The first cohort, which included Nadia and Melissa, qualified in January 2017.

The scheme was set up by TLEF in response to the shortage of legal aid training contracts. Pressure on public funding meant the sector could no longer afford to offer training contracts, leading to fears about where the next generation of social justice lawyers would come from.

The Fellowship scheme allows selected social welfare organisations to continue to recruit talented and committed young lawyers at no cost to themselves, by covering the trainees' salaries, plus associated supervision costs.

The Fellowship aims not just to train social welfare lawyers, but equip them to become future leaders of the profession. As well as their legal training, Fellows receive training in other important skills, such as business planning, fundraising and communications. Each Fellow also has responsibility for their own access to justice project, to develop their skills and to potentially identify a new work and income stream for their organisation.

Nadia Hussain

Objectives

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Denise suggests the ripple effect of the Fellowship scheme may help counter the image of legal aid as a poor career choice for ambitious young lawyers. 'It's not just a funded training contract. It's about giving this work status and some attraction for people to come into it. We know that lots of students are getting huge debts and are going into corporate law, even though they don't necessarily want to. This area of law, is not well paid, but is really interesting. It's all about people and the work that they are doing is really exciting and meaningful. I think that's a big thing.'

Nadia, as an experienced case worker before she qualified, has enough experience not to be starry-eyed about the challenges involved in the work.

'It's a difficult area of law. You get setbacks from the Legal Aid Agency. You then get setbacks from your opposition. You get setbacks in the general media, as well. I think you have to have that ambition within yourself or that instinct to want to challenge things. But with some of the really good decisions that we get, you know it definitely makes a difference.'

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The Fellowship has given me a different drive that even I didn't know was there before I started.

Nadia describes one recent case involving an 18-year-old Syrian woman, who had been unable to join her family when they fled to the UK. She had ended up in Turkey, where she married and had a baby. Her husband, who was also Syrian, had returned home to fight, leaving her and the child alone. She was then violently raped by a gang of men. Deeply traumatised, she became separated from her child, but managed to find her way to this country to join her parents and sister. The entire family were desperate to get the baby back and asked Nadia to apply for an entry visa. Nadia says the young woman, who was still only 19, was 'completely broken' by what had happened to her. The grandfather was prepared to risk his refugee status by going to Turkey to bring the baby back, which Nadia strongly advised against. Things looked very bleak.

Nadia says: 'A couple of weeks ago, we heard the child was on the Syria/Turkey border and I'm thinking if he enters Syria, we are never going to be able to get this baby out, because the Red Cross won't go into the country and the International Organization for Migration won't work there.' It was a desperate, heartbreaking situation. Nadia did everything she could as a lawyer, but wasn't hopeful it would be enough.

Nadia says: 'Then, yesterday, I got a photograph of the child at Manchester Airport with the IOM worker, and mum and granddad. So that was just one of the best results I've had.'

She adds: 'This job is about so much more than how many zeros there are on the end of your salary packet.'

Melissa, echoes her colleague's comments. 'Every time I get a successful result for clients, it's a massive high. It's not just winning a case, you are changing somebody's life. It still makes me really happy to be able to give good news to clients.'



Melissa Darnbrough

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Grants 2017

Integrated Education Fund (Hazelwood Integrated College)

£2,000

Travel and Accommodation Costs

Supporting a team of students from Hazelwood Integrated College in Belfast to participate in the finals of the Bar Mock Trials competition.

Justice First Fellowship

£1,252,399

Hosting a Justice First Fellow trainee solicitor or barrister.

Action in the Community, Bar Pro Bono Unit, Brighton Housing Trust, Coram Childrens Legal Centre, Derbyshire Law Centre, Deighton Pierce Glynn Solicitors, Govan Law Centre, Greater Manchester Law Centre, Hackney Community Law Centre, Just for Kids Law, Legal Advice Centre (University House), Liberty, Mary Ward Legal Centre, MiCLU at Islington Law Centre, Minton Solicitors , North Kensington Law Centre, Public Law Project, Trinity Chambers.

Lord Edmund-Davies Legal Education Trust

£5,500

LEDLET Summer Scheme 2017

Supporting 10 students from Wales to spend a week in London undertaking legal work experience and receiving careers advice, with priority given to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Sutton Trust

£256,667

Pathways to Law – Phase 4 (Year 2)

Supporting Pathways to Law programme which works to inspire and support academically-able year 10 and 11 students, from nonprivileged backgrounds who are interested in a career in law.



15 new Justice First Fellows joined the scheme in 2017

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How we amplify our work:

- Research and learning
- Law, policy and regulation
- Communications
- Information technology

TLEF funds legal education and training activities to bring about its strategic objectives. From the outset, we put a strong emphasis on research and learning, and information technology as important 'tools' for achieving our aims. Both have proved themselves to be significant components in the way we work. This year, we have reviewed the growing bank of projects we have funded over the past five years, prompting us to develop two further areas of activities: work relating to law, policy and

regulatory reform to create a more supportive environment for the areas in which the Foundation operates; and work to expand the use of communications to disseminate learning and make voices heard.

We see these four areas – research and learning; law, policy and regulation; communications; and IT – as playing a decisive role in supporting and amplifying the work we fund, and ensuring we continue to meet our aims. On the next few pages, members of TLEF's team explain more about our approach.



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Funding tools

Research and learning

Director of research and learning, Natalie Byrom, explains why TLEF continues to emphasise the importance of obtaining robust evidence of what works in the justice sector, and some of the challenges involved.

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Research is vital to help us understand where legal need is greatest and prioritise resources, accordingly.

The justice system is facing rapid change, which underscores the need to grow the evidence base of what works in supporting individuals to access their rights, protections and fair treatment.

Supporting the creation of robust evidence remains critical to TLEF’s mission. Research is vital to help us understand where legal need is greatest, and prioritise resources, accordingly. TLEF is committed to funding research that enables us to identify and promote the most effective methods, both of educating people about the law, and supporting them to use this knowledge to secure their rights.

In 2017, TLEF reaffirmed its commitment to learning through our grant making by investing in a large scale independent evaluation of the TLEF-funded Make Our Rights Reality Programme, a complex, multi-site initiative, that aims both to help young people improve their knowledge of the existing law and equip them with the skills to use it, through peer education and social action. The independent evaluation, conducted by the Evidence Based Practice Unit, a collaboration between University College London’s Faculty of Brain Science and the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families, will provide us with valuable insights into the ways in which young people are engaging with the programme.

As part of our commitment to building capacity to undertake robust empirical research into legal education and the justice system, TLEF has funded a post-doctoral research fellowship, based at the Bonavero Centre for Human Rights at the University of Oxford. The fellow will conduct a three-year empirical research project under the direction of Professor Kate O’Regan and an interdisciplinary team of academics.

Growing the evidence base in this sector is not without its obstacles. Not least among these is that, historically, the legal services and legal education sectors have placed little emphasis on the importance of evidence-led approaches to the design and delivery of services. Court and other data which is vital for methodological research is not collected or made available, and the number of academics and researchers with methodological skills and expert knowledge of civil and administrative justice-related issues is falling.

These challenges are not unique to this jurisdiction. As Jim Greiner, professor of law and founder of the pioneering Harvard Access to Justice Lab states: ‘The fundamental issue with access to justice is that a lot of what we do is wrong and we don’t yet know what that is.’

The size of these challenges does, however, indicate the need to intervene strategically and at scale to address them.

In the coming year, the Foundation will be exploring a new model for delivering its research and learning function, and we look forward to reporting on this in the 2017/18 Annual Review.

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Law, policy and regulation

Swee Leng Harris, head of policy and public affairs, explains the thinking behind the Foundation's new emphasis on shaping the wider environment in which our work is conducted.



The focus of our policy work during 2017 has been on Brexit.

The law reform associated with the UK's leaving the European Union is extensive and unprecedented. It will dominate law reform and policy in the UK in the coming period and means the organisations and programmes we support will stand on shifting sands, as the legal and policy environment changes. In recognition of this, the Foundation investigated what its role might be in this context and decided to make Brexit the initial focus of our policy programme.

Foundation staff conducted research and scoping work, including around 100 interviews and field visits, as well as participating in senior meetings and roundtables of academics and key stakeholders. This helped us understand the complex consequences of Brexit for law in the UK, and to identify our goals in this area.

Our policy focus will be on enabling civil society organisations to understand and engage in the policy process surrounding Brexit, in order that the needs, rights and interests of their beneficiaries are reflected in the legal framework that emerges post-Brexit. The organisations we support will do this by building and contributing their technical legal expertise to parliamentarians, government officials and relevant organisations outside government, who are involved in the Brexit process. Our work will also involve helping, via legal education, individuals affected by Brexit to manage the implications of the UK's leaving the EU.

In Scotland, the Foundation is supporting the Civil Society Brexit Project, organised by the Human Rights Consortium Scotland, working with the Scottish Universities Legal Network on Europe (SULNE). The consortium has a wide range of members from across different sectors of civil society in Scotland, and SULNE is comprised of all of the law departments in Scottish universities. The project will use events, resources, and advice to enable civil society organisations in Scotland to draw on the legal expertise of SULNE, and engage with the policy processes of Brexit. The project will also help organisations prepare for the consequences of Brexit for themselves or their service users.

Another example of the Foundation's activity on Brexit was a grant to the human rights organisation Liberty, which enabled it to produce expert legal research and analysis on Brexit, especially the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill. Liberty's work has highlighted the role of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights in protecting rights in the UK, for example in the recent Supreme Court case that established equal pension rights for same sex couples. Liberty acted in the case, and its analysis of the impact of the charter informed debate in parliament on the bill across all major political parties.

As the Brexit process evolves, the Foundation will continue to refine its strategy and approach to the legal consequences of the UK's exit from the EU. We will also consider the development of our policy programme in areas other than Brexit in the coming year.

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Funding tools

Communications

Fiona Bawdon, TLEF's communications consultant, explains why lawyers need to be skilled communicators as well as experts in the law, when delivering legal education and services.

TLEF believes that a vital skill for individuals and organisations committed to legal education is the ability to communicate clearly and powerfully, with key local and national audiences.

However, in a sector with a long history of under-funding and which is often lawyer-led, communications skills and investing in communications resources can be seen as of secondary importance, compared with technical legal knowledge.

TLEF thinks communication and legal skills are complementary to each other. We believe that lawyers are often well placed to act as advocates for their clients, and drive wider efforts to help people understand and use the law, not just inside the courtroom or classroom, but beyond – to the media, politicians, policymakers, and others.

Whether supporting a client to navigate through a legal process, or bringing a challenge in the Supreme Court, we believe it is important for lawyers to understand the value of being able to explain how often complex legal issues affect the lives of ordinary people.

To date, TLEF's communications support has been focused on our Justice First Fellowship scheme. As a standard part of the support provided by TLEF, Fellows are given group and one-to-one communications training, and access to ongoing support. As a result of this input, since the scheme began, more than 20 Fellows have had articles published in the national and specialist press, or appeared on broadcast media. These articles – on topics ranging from legal expenses insurance, to what life is like for a trainee solicitor on the social justice front line, to a legal challenge over the scope of the so-called Alan Turing law – have served to highlight social welfare issues to a wider audience, and have led to Fellows being contacted by potential new clients experiencing similar injustice, and by likeminded lawyers, who are interested in sharing expertise. Our aim is to equip all the Fellows with communications skills at this early stage in their careers, so they are confident to go on to become commentators and influencers, and for this expertise to filter through to their organisations and into the sector more widely.

We can also provide funding for grantees to bring in communications expertise, where needed, and offer direct assistance, via TLEF's communications consultant, who has considerable experience in the legal and social justice sector.

We encourage organisations who are making grant applications to consider whether their projects would benefit from the inclusion of a communications strategy.



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Funding tools

Information technology

Alan Humphreys, TLEF's deputy chief executive and secretary, highlights the important ways in which IT can help deliver legal education and legal services.

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We believe technology can be used to provide timely and cost-effective training and advice for organisations and practitioners.

The belief that information technology has an important role to play in achieving our strategic objectives runs right across our grants programme. With funding for legal services under pressure, IT will continue to be a primary way of increasing capacity by improving both the reach and productivity of the sector. The work that we have funded in this area falls under three main headings: infrastructure; advice delivery; training and advice for organisations and practitioners.

Through our knowledge of the sector, we know that many advice organisations are struggling with out-of-date computers and IT systems, which they cannot afford to replace, but which hamper their effectiveness, and mean they will not be ready for the digitisation of government services, in particular the online courts.

In 2017, the Foundation funded the first stages of a major programme to upgrade the IT systems of members of Law Centres Network, Legal Action Group, and the Free Representation Unit, among others.

Limitations on funding and changes in technology mean IT will have a growing role to play in providing access to legal advice and information. During 2017, we funded projects to deliver advice through websites, guided pathways, and apps, including for Maternity Action, RCJ Advice, seAp (see case study page 09), National Family Mediation, and Coroners Court Support Service, among others. We funded Fully Focused Productions to produce films using dramatic stories to inform young people facing homelessness about their rights.

We have also supported organisations to pilot the use of video calls (such as Skype), to deliver face to face advice, remotely. These projects are still in their infancy in the advice sector, but we believe there is considerable scope to expand use of this widely-available technology.

In 2017, the Foundation funded Avon and Bristol Law Centre and Legal Advice Centre (University House) London, to pilot Skype-based systems to deliver advice to North Somerset and Falmouth, respectively. We believe technology can be used to provide timely and cost-effective training and advice for organisations and practitioners.

We have funded training for Fair Trials International, Grapevine, and the extension of the Bates Wells Braithwaite Get Legal project for small charities, among others.

In the next period, the Foundation will continue to support organisations to move their infrastructure to cloud-based systems. We will also support them to utilise these new facilities to increase their number of volunteers, and also to continue to experiment with delivering advice to other areas to tackle advice deserts. We will also be monitoring experiments in establishing pathways for advice, which we believe have considerable potential for increasing the number of people assisted.

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Financial summary

Financial Summary		
	£m 2017	£m 2016
Investment Fund	253.8	222.3
Income		
Investments	3.6	3.4
Grants and donations	0.4	0.4
	4.0	3.8
Expenditure		
New grants	5.0	4.3
Adjustment to prior year grants	(0.1)	(0.1)
Grant making and research	0.8	0.7
Other direct costs	0.2	0.4
Governance	0.1	0.1
Investment management	0.1	0.1
Other	0.2	0.2
	6.3	5.7

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The Legal Education Foundation

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