



TEXAS INDIGENT DEFENSE COMMISSION

Improvement Grant Training

FY 2026 Application Cycle

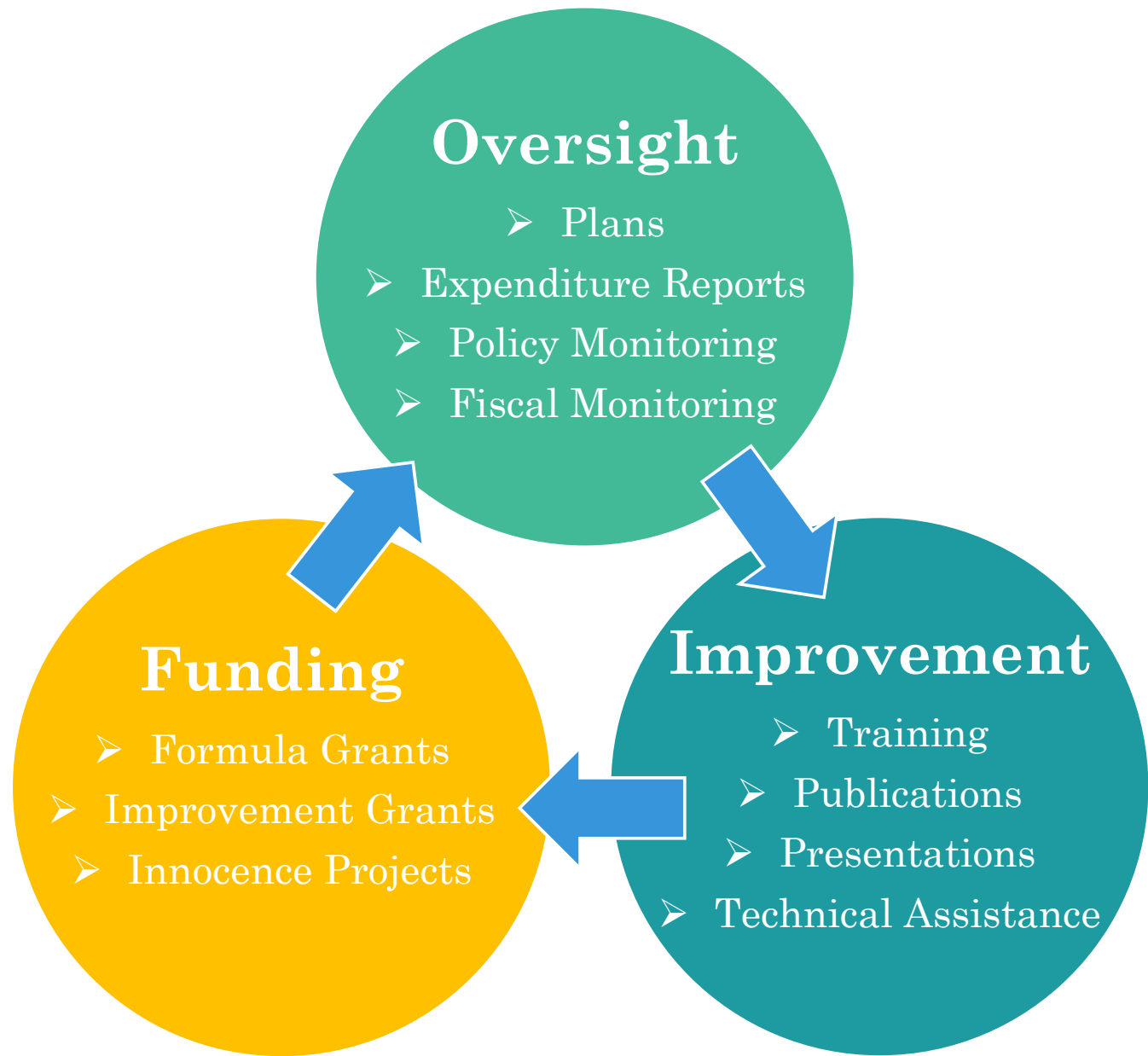
January 24, 2025

Please stand by,
the presentation will begin shortly.



Our Mission:

**Protecting the
right to
counsel,
improving
public defense**



Who we are

TIDC Grants Team

grants@tidc.texas.gov



Edwin Colfax
Director of Grant Funding
ecolfax@tidc.texas.gov
512-463-2508



Eric Schneider
Grants Coordinator
eschneider@tidc.texas.gov
737-279-9324



Doriana Torres
Grants Coordinator
dtorres@tidc.texas.gov
512-463-8015

How we can help

TIDC Grants Team

- Determining whether an idea is eligible
- Advice and support with the application process and budget development
- Review and feedback on draft applications
- Award logistics, reporting, & modifications

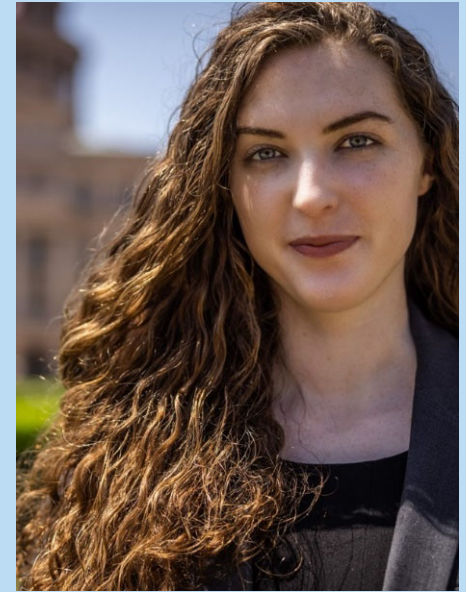
Who we are

How we can help

TIDC Improvement Team



William R. "Bill" Cox
Director of Public Defense
Improvement
wcox@tidc.texas.gov
512-936-6994



Kristin Meeks
Policy Analyst
kmeeks@tidc.texas.gov
512-936-6994

TIDC's Improvement Team can help with:

- Planning Studies for PDs and MACs
- Implementation Assistance
- Education and Training
- Mentoring Program
- Publications

Overview

- **TIDC Grant Types**
- **Examples of Eligible Improvement Programs**
- **How to Apply**
- **Q&A**

Grant Types

Formula Grants

- Based on combination of population and indigent defense spending
- Almost all counties receive them
- Reimburse a small fraction of indigent defense costs

Improvement Grants

- Program-Specific Funding
- Transforms the system to improve indigent defense

FY2026 Improvement Grant Application Now Open

FY2026 Improvement Grant Request for Applications

- TIDC's annual funding opportunity
- New programs that improve criminal and/or juvenile defense representation
- Programs beginning October 2025
- Requires county matching funds

FY 2026 Improvement Grant Request for Applications (RFA)

Available on TIDC Website:

[https://www.tidc.texas.gov/media/
dwqhb3d/fy2026-improvement-
grant-rfa.pdf](https://www.tidc.texas.gov/media/dwqhb3d/fy2026-improvement-grant-rfa.pdf)

**Essential
Reading!**



FY2026

Indigent Defense Improvement Grant Request for Applications (RFA)

Section I: Overview

The Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) provides financial and technical support to counties to develop and sustain quality, cost-effective indigent defense systems. TIDC's Improvement Grant Program provides program-specific funding awarded on a competitive basis. The Commission may provide Improvement Grants for any program that improves indigent defense services.

Period for Funding and Program Operation: October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026.

Application Due Date for Priority Consideration: May 9, 2025.

Applications must be submitted online through TIDC's [Grant and Plan Management Website \(http://tidc.tamu.edu\)](http://tidc.tamu.edu). Applications submitted after the due date may be considered if funds remain available after award decisions on applications meeting the priority deadline.

Optional Intent to Submit Application (ISA)

Applicants that have not been actively working with TIDC on their grant application are strongly encouraged to submit a brief Intent to Submit Application (ISA) online form prior to developing a new grant application. The ISA provides an opportunity for TIDC to provide initial feedback on whether the proposed program is within the scope of the grant program. Although ISAs are optional, counties should submit them by April 1, 2025 in order to provide sufficient opportunity to incorporate TIDC feedback when developing a full application. Contact the TIDC Grant Team at 512-463-2508 or ecolfax@tidc.texas.gov or Grants@tidc.texas.gov to initiate an ISA.

Improvement Grant Categories:

Multi-Year Improvement Grants

- Funding for programs providing indigent defense representation, including public defender offices, managed assigned counsel programs, and indigent defense coordinator programs.
- Provides funding over four years.
- Typically reimburses up to 80% of total approved project costs for the first year; 60% for the second year; 40% for the third year; and 20% for the fourth year.
- Awards for multi-year grants are made each fiscal year, with funding of eligible expenses provided on a reimbursement basis. Grantees will be required to submit a brief continuing grant application form for continued funding each grant year.
- Minimum of \$50,000 per application.
- Require a cash match as described above.

Improvement Grants

How much
funding is
available?

- **TIDC has a revenue shortfall of ~\$10-12 million for the current biennium**
- **Significant new grants had to be paused in FY25**
- **TIDC's budget request to the legislature addresses the shortfall and need for new funds.**
- **Available funds for FY26 will be determined in late May when budget adopted.**

Improvement Grant Program



Competitive application
process



Grant payments made on a
reimbursement basis

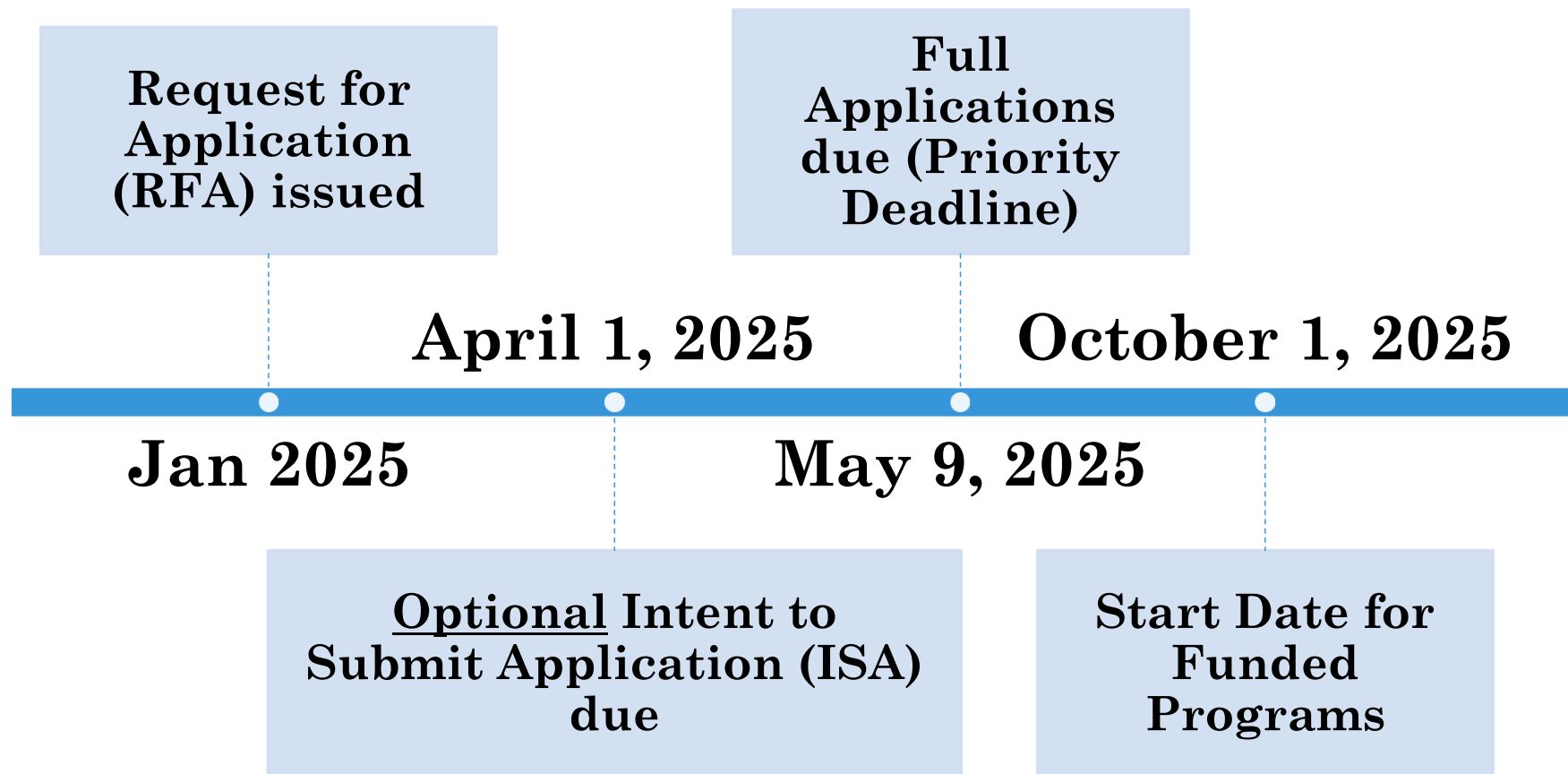


Normally require county
matching funds



Develop new programs or
processes to improve
indigent defense services

FY2026 Improvement Grant Timeline



FY2026 Improvement Grant RFA

Multi-Year Grant Program



Direct Client Services (public defenders and MACs) and Indigent Defense Coordinators



County match requirement



4-Years of Funding
Step-down Reimbursement
80% - 60% - 40% - 20%



Grantees committed to continue program after grant period

FY2026 Improvement Grant RFA

Rural Regional Public Defender Sustainability Grants



Regional public
defender programs
covering 3+ counties



Counties with
populations under
100k



Reimburses 80% in
first year, then 2/3

FY2026 Improvement Grant RFA

Single Year Grant Program



New indigent defense process improvements that may include technology.



Minimum request \$5,000.
(Routine tech upgrades or replacements not eligible)



Requires county matching funds.
See RFA for details.

FY2026 Improvement Grant RFA

Technical Support Grants



Special projects:
research, program
assessments, or pilots



Build the indigent
defense knowledge base,
test processes that can
be applied widely



Must produce project
paper with results,
lessons learned

FY2026 Improvement Grant RFA Other Grants



Extraordinary disbursement grants help with unusual spikes in costs causing a hardship



Compliance Assistance Grants are initiated by TIDC to address monitoring findings



These follow separate application processes. Contact TIDC to initiate an application.

Examples of Eligible Improvement Programs

Multi-Year Improvement Grant Program Examples

Public Defender Programs (local and regional)

Managed Assigned Counsel Programs

Programs for Defendants with Mental Illness

Indigent Defense Coordinators

Criminal/Immigration Consulting Attorneys
(“*Padilla* attorneys” focused on immigration-related collateral consequences)

Managed Defender Offices



Public Defender: Full-time employees (attorneys and support staff) provide representation.



Managed Assigned Counsel: Private attorneys are appointed, supported, and paid by a defense management organization.

Benefits of Public Defenders

Staff attorneys provide defense representation as a cohesive department

Provide greater transparency, oversight, accountability and quality control

Regularly staff court dockets and reduce delays due to attorney schedule conflicts

Provide support services such as staff investigators, caseworkers, administrative support, training

Supervision and professional development

Can be a county department (like prosecutor) or contract with a non-profit organization (such as Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid)

Can be regional program serving multiple counties

Public Defender Offices



PUBLIC
DEFENDER
PRIMER

*Explore Texas public defender offices
and build your own.*



Benefits of Managed Defender Offices

- Independence
- Oversight
- Efficiency
- Reliability
- Compliance
- Training

- In short:
 - Better management
 - Better representation
 - Better outcomes

Primer on Managed Assigned Counsel Programs

Managed Assigned Counsel Programs



September 2017

Mental Health Defender Program Grants

- **Specialized representation for defendants with mental illness**
- **New or expanded programs**

Mental Health Defender Programs

Public Defender or MAC, single county or regional.

Specialized lawyers coordinate with social workers to represent defendants with mental illness.

Programs help stabilize defendants, link with treatment & resources

Cost savings through jail diversion, reduced recidivism

Specialized Mental Health Defender Programs



Texas Mental Health Defender Programs



October 2018

Regional Programs

Smaller counties may not have enough cases to justify a dedicated program on their own.

Counties can collaborate on regional programs.

A “lead” county applies for a grant on behalf of group.

Structured through inter-local agreements.

Participating counties pay the lead county for their share of program cost.

Rural Regional Public Defender Programs



Counties under 100k may be eligible for 2/3 sustainability funding.



Three or more counties.



Contact TIDC to explore regional options.

Indigent Defense Coordinators



Improve appointment process and compliance with the Fair Defense Act



Dedicated individual appoints based on the wheel (delegated authority)



Review vouchers for consistency with fee schedule



Track attorney/client contact

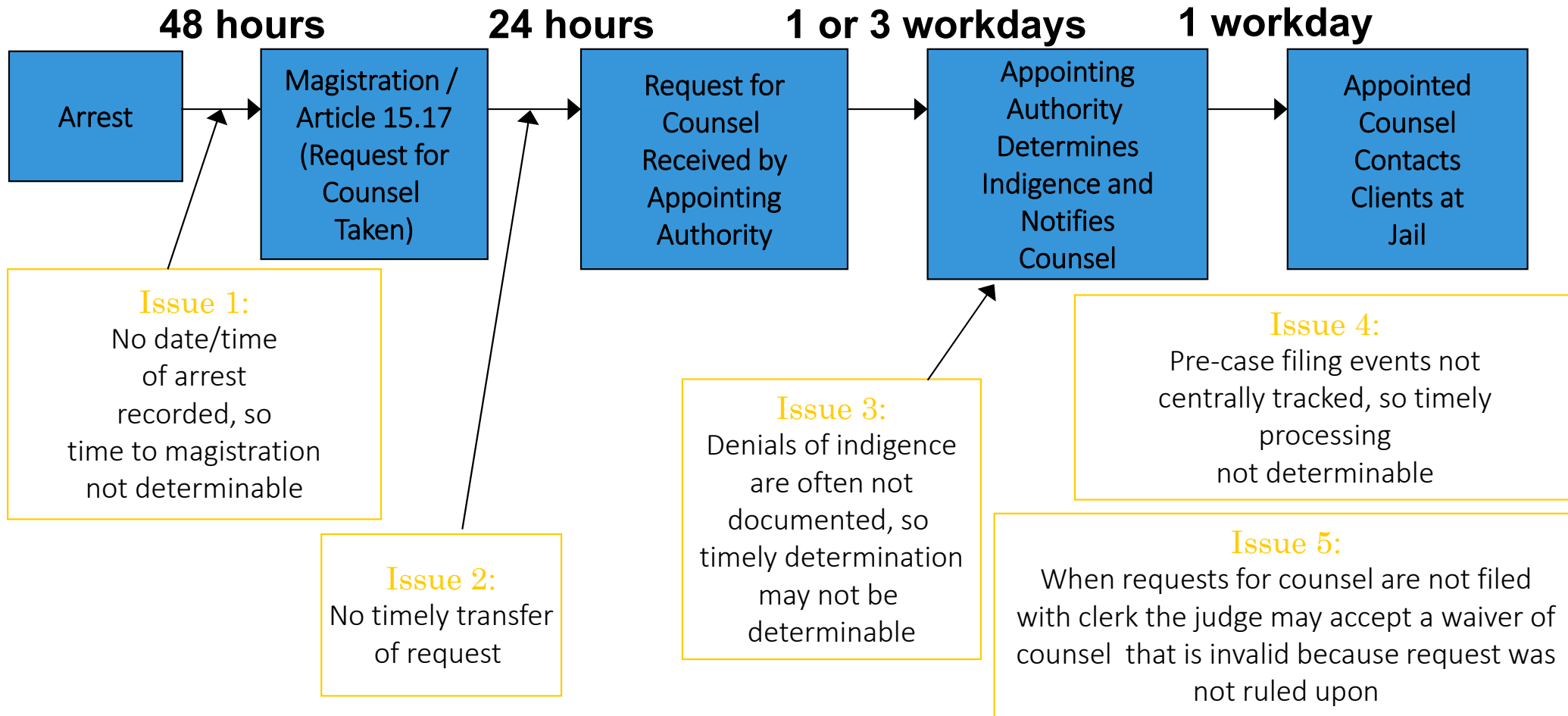


Tracks attorney CLE



Tracks and reports on complaints

Appointment of Counsel Timelines & Challenges



Single-Year
Improvement
Grant
Program
Examples

Technology programs for indigent defense process management

Other one-time indigent defense improvement projects

Conference of Urban Counties

- **Indigent Defense Management Software**
- **Cloud-Based**
- **Streamlines appointment & payment processes**

TechShare Program

- **Tracks compliance with Fair Defense Act**
- **Enhances transparency**



TechShare Indigent Defense Program

Conference of Urban Counties



Eligibility Screening – Financial info analyzed & recommendation issued on eligibility



Automates appointment of the next qualified attorney based on charged offense.



Electronic fee vouchers routed to judges for review and approval, sent electronically to auditor for payment



Streamlines preparation the Indigent Defense Expenditure Report (IDER)

Ideas for Exploring New Grant Projects

Getting Started

Dialogue with Stakeholders

District and County Court Judges

Constitutional County Court Judges and Commissioners

JPs and Magistrate Judges

Sheriffs

Auditors

Defense Bar

Local Mental Health Authority

Community Leaders/Advocates

**Getting
Started**

**Exploring
Improvement
Opportunities**

Is the quality of representation monitored?
Is there oversight and accountability?

Is data used to evaluate our system and compliance with the Fair Defense Act?

Are jail costs too high because of indigent defense-related delays and unnecessary incarceration?

**Getting
Started**

**Exploring
Improvement
Opportunities**

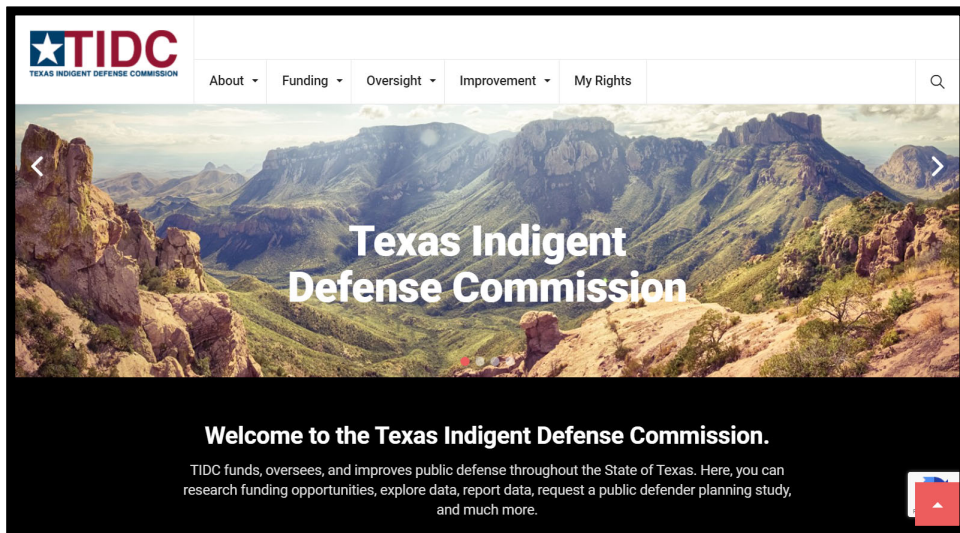
Are mentally ill defendants repeatedly cycling through the system?

Are defendants getting prompt access to counsel?

Are there delays moving the docket related to defense counsel availability?

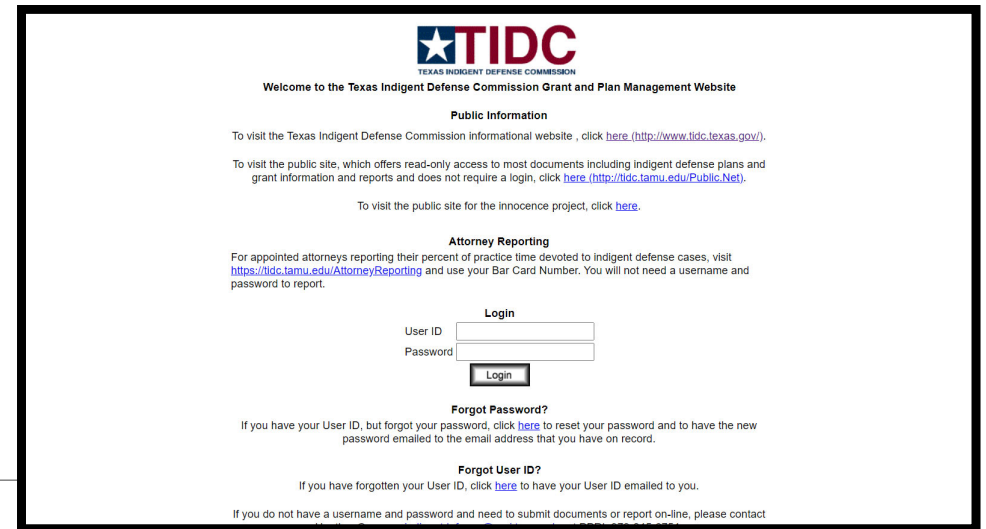
How to Apply

TIDC Online



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC). At the top left is the TIDC logo, which includes a star and the text "TIDC TEXAS INDIGENT DEFENSE COMMISSION". To the right of the logo is a navigation menu with the following items: "About", "Funding", "Oversight", "Improvement", and "My Rights". A search icon is located to the right of the menu. Below the navigation menu is a large banner image of a Texas landscape with the text "Texas Indigent Defense Commission" overlaid in white. Below the banner is a black box with the text "Welcome to the Texas Indigent Defense Commission." and a paragraph of text: "TIDC funds, oversees, and improves public defense throughout the State of Texas. Here, you can research funding opportunities, explore data, report data, request a public defender planning study, and much more." A small red and white icon is visible in the bottom right corner of the banner area.

<http://tidc.texas.gov>



The screenshot shows the "Attorney Reporting" page of the TIDC. At the top is the TIDC logo. Below the logo is the text "Welcome to the Texas Indigent Defense Commission Grant and Plan Management Website". The page is divided into sections: "Public Information", "Attorney Reporting", and "Forgot Password?". The "Public Information" section contains three paragraphs of text with links to informational websites, the public site, and the innocence project. The "Attorney Reporting" section contains a paragraph of text and a login form. The login form has two input fields labeled "User ID" and "Password", and a "Login" button. The "Forgot Password?" section contains a paragraph of text with a link to reset the password. The "Forgot User ID?" section contains a paragraph of text with a link to retrieve the User ID. At the bottom of the page is a paragraph of text: "If you do not have a username and password and need to submit documents or report on-line, please contact".

<http://tidc.tamu.edu>

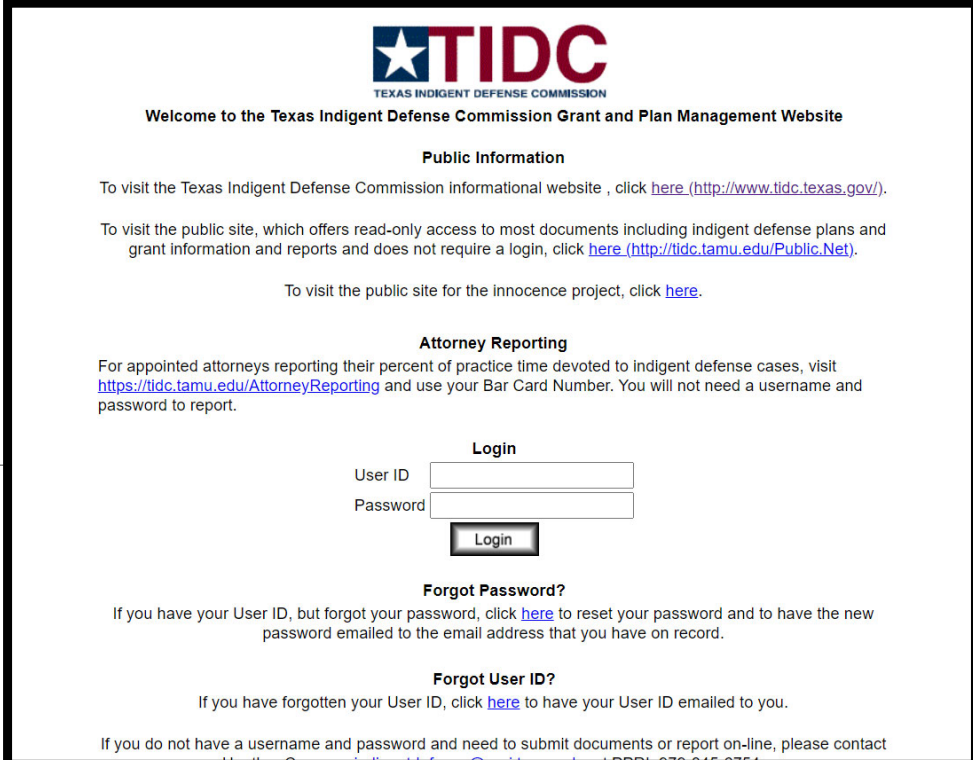
Online Grant Applications

<http://tidc.tamu.edu>

Contact Katy Gottwald for
password/log-in assistance:

tidc@tamu.edu or

Phone: 979-845-6754



TIDC
TEXAS INDIGENT DEFENSE COMMISSION

Welcome to the Texas Indigent Defense Commission Grant and Plan Management Website

Public Information

To visit the Texas Indigent Defense Commission informational website, click [here](http://www.tidc.texas.gov/) (<http://www.tidc.texas.gov/>).

To visit the public site, which offers read-only access to most documents including indigent defense plans and grant information and reports and does not require a login, click [here](http://tidc.tamu.edu/Public.Net) (<http://tidc.tamu.edu/Public.Net>).

To visit the public site for the innocence project, click [here](#).

Attorney Reporting

For appointed attorneys reporting their percent of practice time devoted to indigent defense cases, visit <https://tidc.tamu.edu/AttorneyReporting> and use your Bar Card Number. You will not need a username and password to report.

Login

User ID

Password

Forgot Password?

If you have your User ID, but forgot your password, click [here](#) to reset your password and to have the new password emailed to the email address that you have on record.

Forgot User ID?

If you have forgotten your User ID, click [here](#) to have your User ID emailed to you.

If you do not have a username and password and need to submit documents or report on-line, please contact

**Optional
Intent to
Submit
Application**

**For counties
not actively
working
with TIDC**

Problem statement (Why is program needed?)

Objectives (What are the goals?)

Activities (What will you do to accomplish these goals?)

Evaluation (How will you measure success?)

General cost estimate

Deadline April 1, 2025

Full Grant Application



Work with TIDC



Solicit review and input from stakeholders



Secure written support from courts, commissioners, or other involved parties



Upload Commissioners Court resolution and supporting documents to application

Application Sections

Problem Statement

Use data to support

If county does not collect data, explain how the grant will help provide data

What drew attention to this issue?

Why does this matter?

Application Sections

Objectives

- **Develop SMART Goals**
 - **Specific**
 - **Measurable**
 - **Attainable**
 - **Realistic**
 - **Time-based**

Application Sections

Activities

Two Parts

- **Implementation – Steps to start program**
- **Operation- Core activities of the program**

Provide details to help reviewers understand how activities meet objectives

Be clear for outsiders – no jargon or undefined acronyms

Application Sections

Evaluation



Think Ahead



What data will demonstrate that your activities achieved the program objectives?



How will that data be collected?



Tie back directly to “SMART” objectives



Qualitative and quantitative elements

Application Sections

Budget

- **Budget narrative should provide detail and explanation for all proposed costs.**

- **“Show the math” – Provide attachment with detailed basis of cost.**

Tips

Review

- Carefully review the RFA and contact TIDC with any questions

Consult

- Identify and discuss with all stakeholders

Complete

- Complete ALL sections of the application

Support

- Commissioners Court Resolution and documentation of judicial support required with application

Call

- Call TIDC if you need help!

CHANGE COUNTY/GRANTEE:

Anderson County

SELECT YEAR:

2025

+ Formula Grant

+ Improvement Grant

START NEW 2025 IG APPLICATION

2025 INTENT TO SUBMIT APP

STATUS REPORT^M

ISA STATUS REPORT^M

REPORTING STATUS

REVIEW REPORT

GRANT PAYMENTS

PROGRESS REPORT DOCUMENTS

PROG. RPT. ANNUAL SUMMARY^M

ISA DUMP^M

PROG. RPT. Q & R^M

PROG. RPT. Q & R DUMP^A

PROGRESS REPORT ITEMS (NEW)^A

ASSIGN PROG RPT QUESTIONS^A

DISPLAY QUESTIONS FOR GROUP^A

MANAGE GRANT^M

ADVANCE IG APPLICATION^A

APPLICATION REVIEW

APPLICATION REVIEW SUMMARY

+ ID Expenditure Report

+ ID Plan

+ CPS

+ Attorney Reporting

+ Regional Participation

+ Direct Client Services Programs

+ Administrative

+ Login Log

+ Contact Database

+ Complaints

+ Training

+ Site Visits and Monitoring

Archives

+ My Profile

Contact Us

Innocence Project^A

Logout

Public Site

Welcome Doriana Torres. Your last login was at 1/21/2025 9:44:35 AM

The email address that we have on file for you is "DTorres@tidc.texas.gov". If this is incorrect, please update it in your profile. This is important in case you forget your password or if we need to contact you.

We have implemented a new menu system. To reduce the length of the menu, the sub items are hidden until the + by the category is clicked.

This website is an online system for collecting and viewing Indigent Defense Plans for all Texas counties and for administrative functions related to the application for, review of, and reporting on Indigent Defense Grants.

Update My Contact Information - Use this link to update your address, email, or phone numbers whenever there are changes.

Contact Information for Anderson County

Constitutional County Judge

Carey G. McKinney
500 N. Church Street
Palestine, TX 75801

phone: 903-723-7406

fax: 903-723-7494

email: cgmckinney@co.anderson.tx.us



Change

Local Administrative District Judge

Charles M Davis
500 N. CHURCH STREET, ROOM
30
PALESTINE, TX 75801

phone: 903-723-7414

fax:

email: MDAVIS@CO.ANDERSON.TX.US



Change

Other Counties: Leon (LADJ)

Local Administrative Statutory County Court Judge

(or County Judge if there is no statutory court within the county)

Jeff Doran
500 N. Church St.
Palestine, TX 75801

phone: 903-723-7469

fax: 903-723-7803

email: jdoran@co.anderson.tx.us



Change

Chairman of the Juvenile Board

Jeff Doran
500 N. Church St.
Palestine, TX 75801

phone: 903-723-7469

fax: 903-723-7803

email: jdoran@co.anderson.tx.us



Change

County Administrative Contact(s)

No County Administrative Contact on Record

County Administrative Contacts are editable only by administrative users [Add](#)

Auditor

Megan Lambright
703 N. Mallard Street, Suite 110
Palestine, TX 75801

phone: 903723-7427

fax:

email: mlambright@co.anderson.tx.us



Change

Authorized Official

Carey G. McKinney
500 N. Church Street
Palestine, TX 75801

phone: 903-723-7406

fax: 903-723-7494

email: cgmckinney@co.anderson.tx.us



Change

Grant Officials

The Program Director must be an officer or employee responsible for the program operation or monitoring and who will serve as the point-of-contact regarding the program's day-to-day operations. The Authorized Official must be authorized to apply for, accept, decline, modify, or cancel the grant for the applicant county. A county judge or a designee authorized by the governing body in its resolution may serve as the authorized official. The program director and the authorized official may be the same person. The financial officer may not serve as the program director or the authorized official. *Texas Government Code §173.301(a)*

Program Director

Rob Kelly
700 Main Street
Kerrville, TX 78028

phone: 830-792-2211
Fax: 830-792-2218
email: cojudge@co.kerr.tx.us

Change

Authorized Official

Rob Kelly
700 Main Street
Kerrville, TX 78028

phone: 830-792-2211
Fax: 830-792-2218
email: cojudge@co.kerr.tx.us

Change

[Resolution / Internet Submission Form](#): Click on link to open new window with Sample resolution. This may be printed or copied (Ctrl+A, Ctrl+C) and pasted (Ctrl+V) into Word Processing software for editing. [Word Version](#)

Printable [Indigent Defense Improvement Grant Program Cooperation Agreement](#)

Application Narrative

[View Instructions](#)

[Introduction \(Executive Summary\)](#)

[Problem Statement](#)

[Objectives](#)

[Activities](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Future Funding](#)

[Budget Narrative and Budget Form](#)

Commissioners Court Resolution

Sample Resolution/Internet Submission Form **Indigent Defense Discretionary Grant Program**

MUST BE PRINTED FROM ONLINE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, under the provisions of the Texas Government Code § 79.037 and Title 1 of the Texas Administrative Code Chapter 173, counties are eligible to receive grants from the Texas Indigent Defense Commission to provide improvements in indigent defense services in the county; and

WHEREAS, the commissioners court authorizes this grant program and application to assist the county in the implementation and the improvement of the indigent criminal defense services in this county; and

WHEREAS, _____ County Commissioners Court has agreed that in the event of loss or misuse of the funds, _____ County Commissioners assures that the funds will be returned in full to the Texas Indigent Defense Commission.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED and ordered that the **OFFICIAL DESIGNATED BY THE COMMISSIONERS' COURT** of this county is designated as the Authorized Official to apply for, accept, decline, modify, or cancel the grant application for the Indigent Defense Discretionary Grant Program and all other necessary documents to accept said grant; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **OFFICIAL DESIGNATED BY THE COMMISSIONERS' COURT** is designated as the Program Director for this grant and the **County Auditor or County Treasurer if the county does not have an auditor (per TAC § 173.301(a))** is designated as the Financial Officer for this grant.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20__.

This is a Sample. Submitted resolution submitted MUST BE PRINTED FROM ONLINE SYSTEM

County Judge

Attest:

County Clerk

INTERNET SUBMISSION FORM

After submitting the discretionary application online, the following Internet submission confirmation number was received # _____. This grant application submission was in accordance with the Commissioners' Court Resolution above.

Authorized Official

Pitfalls to Avoid

(What NOT to Do)

Not building broad support
with other stakeholders

Including non-indigent
defense specific costs

Vague descriptions of how
activities will improve
indigent defense

Lack of plan for documenting
impact of program

**Contact
TIDC for
help!**

The TIDC Grants Team can:

- Help you explore ideas
- Put you in touch with counties that have implemented successful programs
- Meet with you and your stakeholders to build consensus on a project plan
- Provide feedback on application drafts

Q&A

Thank you!

TIDC Improvement Team



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TIDC Grants Team



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