2016 Comprehensive Survey of Lawyer Incubators

ABA Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services
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Incubators designed to help recently-admitted lawyers develop and launch new practices while expanding access to underserved populations are a recent innovation. The first project, the Incubator for Justice, was created at the City University of New York Law School in 2007. Since then, over 60 incubators have emerged around the globe, the vast majority of which are in the US.

In 2012, Hanover Research was commissioned to examine the efforts undertaken by law schools to support their recent graduates as they started work in solo and small firm practices. The result of that research was an “environmental scan” of newly emerged incubator and legal residency programs. This was the first report that provided analysis of these innovations.¹

The 2016 Comprehensive Survey of Lawyer Incubators is the first research to provide data on these programs. The Survey serves several purposes, including:

- To explore the nature, structure and design of the programs that have emerged;
- To provide direction to those considering the development of incubators;
- To preliminarily assess the extent to which programs are addressing dual missions of preparing lawyers for successful and sustainable practices, while advancing a social impact designed to narrow the justice gap;
- To enable those operating incubators to compare notes and determine where their projects fit into the broader scheme of incubators; and
- To set a baseline that can be used to measure change over time.

Several key findings emerge from the data collected in the Comprehensive Survey.

- *There has been a recent growth of incubators.* Although the first incubator emerged in 2007, three fourths of the programs that responded to the Survey have been created since 2014. Some of the programs included here have very recently “graduated” their first class of incubator participants and a few have not even reached that point. Consequently, some of the metrics included in the survey are very preliminary.

- *The nature, structure and design of incubators varies greatly from one program to another.* The Survey demonstrates that the development of incubators has been organic. These is no template for their design and operations. While many are sponsored by law schools, several are collaborative efforts and some are sponsored by other entities, such as bar associations and foundations, legal aid programs, law firms and non-profit organizations. The services offered by incubators, the funding sources and the range of legal services provided by the participating lawyers to their clients all vary considerably from one program to another. The ABA and the

¹ See Law School Solo Practice Incubators and Legal Residency Programs, Hanover Research, at http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/legal_aid_indigent_defendants/ls_sclaid_hanover_report.authcheckdam.pdf
Consortium for Access to Justice have provided resources to help incubators share information, but nevertheless, programs tend to reflect the needs of both their communities and their participating lawyers in unique and varied ways.

- **Incubators are aggressively advancing social responsibility through pro bono services and orientations to low and moderate income populations.** The common denominator running through most incubators is their dual mission to prepare recently-admitted lawyers to develop and launch new practices while at the same time providing services to underserved populations. Pro bono is a fixture in seven out of every ten programs.

- **Incubators are providing their participating lawyers with an array of educational and practice management tools.** In-kind support from legal service vendors enable incubator participants to test-drive a wide variety of resources designed to support their practices, create efficiencies and enable the delivery of services at lower costs.

- **Innovation is stressed in many programs but has room to grow in others.** Several of the programs are introducing concepts such as unbundled legal services, niche markets and alternative billing structures, but some focus on more traditional practice methods. This points to an opportunity for the larger community of incubator programs to draw from the resources of one another and suggests that some level of peer-to-peer technical assistance can expand an environment of experimentation.

- **The short-term metrics of incubators are very preliminary and do not measure the long-term potential of the programs on both assistance to recently-admitted lawyers and those in need of affordable legal services.** Data regarding the impact incubators have had on client communities are valuable for baseline comparisons, but too preliminary to serve as meaningful metrics of these programs. The impact of incubators are intended to be long-term, creating a cadre of lawyers that have careers with sustainable practices that meet the legal needs of underserved communities and clients over the span of decades.

- **The overwhelming concern of those operating incubators is their sustainability.** While many programs are operating on shoe-string budgets, others, particularly those with substantive staff, are often costly. Seemly the sustainability of incubators depends on the identification of stable and on-going sources of support.
INTRODUCTION

The City University of New York’s (CUNY) Incubator for Justice was the first lawyer incubator to launch, beginning in 2007. As of August 2016, there are over 60 existing or planned programs spanning 33 states and four countries. Lawyer incubators provide resources, training and mentors to enable newly-admitted lawyers to acquire the range of skills necessary to launch their own successful solo or small-firm practices. The missions of these programs are often two-fold, further aiming to expand access to justice to those of low- and moderate-incomes.

The Consortium for Access to Justice; A Collaborative Community of Law Practice Incubators and Non-Profit Law Firms (called “The Consortium”) was formed by the California Western, Touro and the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) law schools together with the American Bar Association’s Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services. Among the goals of The Consortium are to address the gap in access to resources in the civil justice system and to help provide solo, small firm and non-profit practitioners with education and training on entrepreneurial skills that will help them operate sustainable practices while serving clients who often do not have access to legal resources.

As an initial matter, the Consortium organizers created this survey to collect and share data about programs and their participants. The hope is to give existing incubators insights about where they fit in the national picture and ideas about how they can further develop their programs. This report provides a summary of the majority of the lawyer incubators in the world.

Research Overview

An invitation to participate in the Comprehensive Incubator Survey was sent to all programs in the Delivery Committee’s online directory of incubators and was posted on the Delivery Committee’s incubator listserv to reach those who had not yet been added to the directory but were nonetheless identified as being in existence. Through these means, program directors and administrators from roughly 60 known programs received a link to the electronic survey, and a message encouraging participation, in February, 2016. The survey was broken down into four major sections: (1) program characteristics; (2) resources and training; (3) client and community services; and (4) the future outlook. In many instances, follow-up questions were tailored to an answer in the previous question and were therefore not presented to all respondents. In all analyses, percentages and summary statistics are based on the number of programs that responded to a particular question. Upon collection, surveys were reviewed for accuracy and completeness and attempts were made to clarify responses and obtain any missing data; nevertheless, some data remain missing or unknown. To obtain some more in-depth insights, a handful of programs were asked six open-ended follow-up questions. Those responses are provided verbatim throughout the report with permission from the participating programs. Preliminary results were presented at the Access to Justice through Incubator Programs and Non-Profit Law firms Conference in Kansas City, Missouri in April, 2016. What follows is the formal report.

2 See http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/legal_aid_indigent_defendants/ls_sclaid_hanover_report.authcheckdam.pdf

3 Profiles of incubators are maintained by the ABA Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services, at http://www.americanbar.org/groups/delivery_legal_services/initiatives_awards/program_main/program_profiles.html
Of the approximately 60 programs contacted, 46 completed the survey, with an approximate response rate of 76.6%. An assortment of entities are represented in the data, including but not limited to: 41 law schools; eight bar associations; two bar foundations; 11 legal aid organizations; eight nonprofit organizations; one court; two private firms; one access to justice commission; and one law library. The law schools represented in this survey make up 19.8% of all ABA-accredited law schools. The 46 respondent programs are located throughout 24 different states and three different countries (including Pakistan and the Dominican Republic). See Appendix A for a map of all known programs in addition to those represented in the survey.

I. PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

Launch Dates

Of the 46 programs that responded to the survey, 41 (89%) indicated that they were already operational at the time of the survey in March 2016. The five programs that are represented but were not yet operational provide projected launch dates all within the year 2016. While not representative of all known programs, the chart below nonetheless demonstrates the substantial growth of the law firm incubator movement since 2007. (Chart 1: “When did the incubator become operational?” n=46)

1. Respondent Programs Launch Year

Since the first incubator opened in 2007, at least five incubators have closed their doors, primarily due to lack of sustained funding. However, in at least one instance, the original operating entity for a now non-operational program has since become involved with another program, as is the case for CUNY which is partnering with the New York City Bar Association on the Court Square Law Project.
Chart #2 above represents the types of entities that operate each program, and Chart #3 below focuses on those that identified as “collaborations.” Programs that are operated exclusively by one type of entity are primarily run by law schools. Note that the category “law schools” encompasses programs run by multiple law schools, while “collaborations” include two or more different types of entities. Recently, collaborations among many different types of entities have emerged in order to pool resources and avoid duplication. However, every collaborative effort thus far involves at least one law school. Most of the programs (39; 85%) do not operate as independent 501(c)3 organizations, although a handful (7) do. Of those seven that identified as operating as 501(c)3 organizations, all have been formally approved. (Chart 2: “What type of entity operates the incubator?” n=46) (Chart 3: Information compiled from “What are the names of the collaborating entities?” n=46)

As evidenced throughout this report, while law schools paved the way for incubators, bar associations, bar foundations, legal aid organizations, law firms and other groups have also demonstrated that they too are embracing the model; launching programs of their own, collaborating with other entities and otherwise providing support and assistance. The development of the movement has been organic. Of course, these figures do not account for the many other organizations, private firms and foundations that were identified in the survey as providing crucial financial and in-kind support. Illustrating the evolution of incubators further is Appendix B which lists all known lawyer incubators – not just those represented in the survey – and their operating entities by launch date.
What is the incubator's relationship with the legal aid community? With the private bar?

Los Angeles Incubator Consortium: Our participants provide at least 200 pro bono hours. There are five legal aid organizations in our consortium, and their staff help supervise the attorneys as they're learning new skills and providing assistance to our community's most underserved populations.

Justice Bridge: It is important to establish and retain strong relationships with the legal aid community and the local bar. We have tried to identify a niche in the legal market that is genuinely underserved and to avoid duplicating effort or competing with the programs of other organizations in our service area. We participated in an extensive "listening tour" before we launched our incubator program and strove to be as responsive as possible to the needs of the community without stepping on the toes of any existing programs sponsored by the local bar associations or legal aid organizations.

Lawyer Entrepreneur Assistance Program: LEAP is located at the Legal Aid Society of Orange County and its participants volunteer with many legal services organizations. There is integration with the private bar as well, as the solo/small firm section has helped with training and helped mentor at our clinics.

Pitt Legal Services Incubator: The local Neighborhood Legal Services program has been welcoming and helpful. Happy to fold the incubator lawyers into training programs, while the incubator lawyers fulfill their pro bono commitment by lending a hand there. The private bar has been also very positive and responsive- especially some of the solo and small firm lawyers. You must proceed with sensitivity to the private bar's concerns of course- and it helps for us to have an experienced lawyer who has been active in the local bar for many years as our Program Director.

Center for Solo Practitioners: Our incubator is known throughout the San Diego legal community, which includes the Legal Aid Society of San Diego and the San Diego County Bar Association. Libraries, legal services organizations, court facilitators, and other public agencies will refer people to our community law clinic. In addition, our incubator lawyers are encouraged to join pro bono volunteer opportunities at non-profit legal services agencies and to participate in local legal community committees and activities.

Legal Innovators for Tomorrow: LIFT is operated under the auspices of the Louisiana State Bar Association’s Access to Justice Department, which has close relationship with the legal aid community, including Legal Services Corporation (LSC) programs, nonprofit organizations, and pro bono programs. Two LIFT incubator project models are collaborations between LIFT, LSCs, and nonprofits. The Domestic Violence Project is a collaboration between Southeast Louisiana Legal Services and the New Orleans Family Justice Center. The LIFT Immigration Bond Project is a collaboration between LIFT and Central Louisiana Interfaith Immigration Center focused on increasing representation of detained immigrants appearing before the Oakdale Immigration Court, located in Central Louisiana.

Justice Entrepreneurs Project: We are integrated in both the legal aid community and the private bar. Participants serve as resident attorneys in legal aid organizations, which gives the legal aid org reliable volunteers, committed to putting in at least 500 hours of pro bono service, and also provides the participants with hands on experience, a network of mentors, and a strong source of referrals as they grow their practices.

*Full descriptions of sources provided in Appendix C
**Selection Process and Admissions**

Programs seek out applicants who can thrive in the incubator environment. In order to better understand the types of applicants programs admit, respondents were asked to rank a series of characteristics on a scale of “not at all important,” “somewhat important,” “important” and “very important.” As demonstrated in Chart #4, respondents chose “perseverance or determination” as the most important characteristic in the selection process, followed closely by a “commitment to access to justice,” a “commitment to underserved populations,” an “entrepreneurial spirit” and a “commitment to solo or small-firm practice.” Respondents chose “business experience” and “legal experience” as the least important characteristics. Situated in the middle were the choices “commitment to innovative delivery services,” “sustainability of the proposed practice” and “practice area.” (Chart 4: “Please individually rank each of the following potential applicant characteristics to indicate its importance in the selection process.” n=46)

![Graph 4: Applicant Characteristics Ranked](image)

To evaluate prospective participants during the admission process, the vast majority of programs require an interview, a resume, an application and a statement of interest. Roughly half also require a business plan, recommendations and/or transcripts. (Chart 5: “What is required of participants when applying to the program?” n=45)

![Graph 5: Application Materials Required](image)
6. Timing of Admissions

Respondents were asked whether their programs have: (a) set start dates at fixed intervals and classes of entrants; (b) ongoing rolling admissions; or (c) some other structure. The majority of programs (29; 63%) admit participants on set start dates at fixed intervals. Ten programs accept participants on a rolling basis, and another seven have some other structure. The survey asked for clarification from those that responded with “other.” One explanation provides that the program uses a hybrid approach – there are set start dates, but if seats are not filled before the program begins, it will proceed with rolling admissions. Another provides that the program’s admission process corresponds with law school graduation and bar passage. (Chart 6: “Please choose which of the following best describes incubator admissions.” n=46)

7. Number of completed cycles

Programs with fixed start dates were further asked how many cycles had passed since becoming operational. Of the 25 programs that provided a response, 11 had gone through one cycle, five through two cycles, four through both three cycles and four cycles and one through six cycles. (Chart 7: “How many completed cycles have the incubator gone through since becoming operational?” n=25)

8. Types of Time Limits

Respondents were asked how long participants stay in the program, and whether there is: (a) a strict time limit; (b) an encouraged time limit subject to discretion; (c) no time limit (and participants just leave when they feel ready); or (c) some other arrangement. Twenty programs reported a “strict time limit” and another twenty indicated “time limit encouraged.” Only two programs chose “no time limit.” From the four programs that chose “other,” noteworthy variations include: a one-year requirement with the option to renew for the second year, mutually agreed upon by the program and attorney, and a 12-month requirement with an ongoing invitation to former participants to attend programs. (Chart 8: “Of the following, please choose what best describes how long incubator lawyers participate in the program.” n=46)
Of the programs that indicated they enforce a strict time limit, seven have 18-month programs; four have 12-month programs; and four have two-year programs. (Chart 9: “Please provide the number of months participants spend in the program.” n=17)

Of the programs that indicated they only encourage a time limit, over half encourage participation for 12 months; two for 18 months; four for 24 months; and one for 36 months. (Chart 10: “Please provide the number of months participants are encouraged to spend in the program.” n=17)

Participants

Respondents were asked how many participants are in their programs. There are 357 lawyers participating in the 46 incubators surveyed, with an average of eight participants per program. Therefore, if one were to extrapolate, one could conclude that approximately 466 lawyers are participating in incubators worldwide.\(^4\) The vast majority of programs (38 out of 46; 83%) have 10 or fewer participants, and twenty of those have five or fewer. On the other end of the spectrum, one program has 50 or more participants and two programs have 20 to 30 participants. Five programs have 11 to 15 participants. Three out of four programs (35; 76%) indicate that their participants are considered independent solo practitioners as opposed to part of one single law firm. (Chart 11: “How many participants are currently in the incubator program?” n=46)

\(^4\) All extrapolations are based on 60 programs, are approximate and are for perspective only; in all instances, significant limitations exist. Appendix B lists additional incubators discovered subsequent to collection and analysis; therefore, using 60 as a baseline may result in a conservative approximation.
On average, 82% of incubator participants are in residence, meaning they have office space located in the incubator, and in 30 programs, 100% of the participants are in residence. Five programs do not have any in-residence participants. Interestingly, when programs were asked whether or not they had reached maximum capacity, 71% (32 out of 45) responded that they could in fact accommodate additional participants. Of those 32 programs, 26 provided the number of open seats available and responses ranged from two to 28 seats; 14 programs have 10 or fewer open seats and 12 programs have 11 to 28 open seats. This matter of open seats was discussed at the Third Annual Incubator Conference, “Access to Justice through Incubator Programs and Non-Profit Law Firms.” There, attendees attributed at least some of this unwillingness to join an incubator to ambiguity surrounding an incubator lawyer’s earning potential and the unavailability of data to ease those uncertainties.

**Graduates**

Respondents were also asked how many participants had “graduated” from the program since it first became operational. Altogether, 221 lawyers had “graduated” from 25 programs at the time they provided their responses. Again, if one were to extrapolate from that moment in time, one could conclude that approximately 530 lawyers have “graduated” from all lawyer incubators. Not surprisingly, twenty of the programs surveyed had not yet produced any graduates. As demonstrated in Chart #1, incubators are a relatively new model and a great number of programs are still in their infancy. As such, programs have the capacity to make an even greater impact simply by maximizing the number of their participants and by advancing to a juncture at which they are producing graduates.

Twenty-five programs were able to provide detailed information about the practice settings of their graduates. Among the 196 graduates for which data was provided, nearly three-quarters (138; 70.4%) went into solo or small-firm practice after leaving the incubator. More precisely, over half (110; 56.1%) started a solo practice or began operating their own small firm, and an additional 14.3% (28) began working in a small firm categorized as having 2-25 lawyers. The third greatest number of graduates (8.2%) were labeled as “don’t know/unsure,” while the fourth greatest (6.6%) began working for a legal nonprofit. The remaining 21.4% were spread across a variety of occupational settings, with no more than 5.1% in any given category. (Chart 12: “Please provide the number of graduates who, after "graduating" from the incubator, began working for each of the following.” n=25)

To put these numbers in context, ABA data that tracks the status of law school graduates nine months after their graduation show that less than a thousand graduates in recent years have opened solo practices. Data from the class of 2015 indicate that only 688 lawyers began new practices.\(^5\) While incubators do not typically draw participants only from the most recent class of graduates, it still appears that the number of lawyers participating in incubators is an appreciable level of recently-admitted lawyers who open solo practices soon after law school graduation.

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\(^5\) See 2015 Law School Graduate Employment Data, ABA, at http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/legal_education_and_admissions_to_the_bar/reports/2015_law_graduate_employment_data.authcheckdam.pdf
While there are obvious distinctions, incubator lawyers often share a dedication to serving the underserved with lawyers who are public interest fellows. Both groups have a dedication to closing the justice gap. While the number of these fellowships does not appear to be aggregated, Equal Justice Works, the leading US program providing fellowships, places between 130 and 140 lawyers in public interest positions per year.\textsuperscript{6} The Skadden Foundation, which is among the leading law firms that funds and places lawyers in public interest fellowships, provides for just under 30 fellowships per year.\textsuperscript{7}

Consequently, lawyer incubators are approaching a scale where they include an appreciable portion of recently-admitted lawyers interested in solo and small firm practices and appear comparable in number to fellows who are involved in legal services directly serving public interest.

\textsuperscript{6} See http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/post-grad
\textsuperscript{7} See https://www.skaddenfellowships.org/fellows-list/2016
Where do case referrals come from?

Los Angeles Incubator Consortium: We have a lot of participating organizations (e.g., five legal aid organizations, three law schools, the LA Law Library, other nonprofits that serve middle and low income clients) so we’ve been getting referrals from them, as well as from traditional sources, like friends, family, word of mouth, etc. A few participants actively promote themselves on AVVO and other online sources.

Justice Bridge: Our incubator attorneys receive referrals from a wide variety of sources including legal service providers, local bar associations, certain state agencies, community groups and other non-profit organizations. They are, of course, also encouraged and supported in their efforts to develop business on their own.

Lawyer Entrepreneur Assistance Program: Participants get referrals from Legal Aid Society of Orange County's own lawyer referral service.

Center for Solo Practitioners: While there are no formal referral arrangements with any person or entity, the lawyers in the incubator receive referrals from a variety of sources, including other incubator lawyers; law school alumni; law school staff, faculty, and students; non-profit organizations; and members of the community. The incubator lawyers also receive referrals through its community law clinics. It should be noted, however, that referrals through these community law clinics are incidental to, and not a focus of, the clinics. The clinics were not started to generate referrals, but we have found that referrals are inevitable, because the community members who access these programs will do so not only for general guidance on the topic of their legal matter, but, also, for guidance on where to find a qualified and ethical attorney. We have procedures in place to assure that the decision to retain a lawyer found through our community law clinics is exclusively in the hands of the client and made outside program hours.

Legal Innovators for Tomorrow: LIFT attorneys receive case referrals from partner organizations depending upon the incubator model in which they are participating. For instance, attorneys in the model focused on representing survivors of domestic violence receive case referrals from the New Orleans Family Justice Center, where they occupy office space, and Southeast Louisiana Legal Services (SLLS), the Legal Services Corporation that provides training and mentorship. Additionally, in a collaborative project with Central Louisiana Interfaith Immigration Center (CLIIC) focused on increasing representation for detained immigrants in bond proceedings in Central Louisiana (where representation rates are at a low of 13%), case referrals come from CLIIC and Catholic Charities of Baton Rouge.

Justice Entrepreneurs Project: Referrals come from an array of individuals and organizations – including legal aid partners, the city’s legal aid hotline, pro se help desks in the courts, community offices of elected officials, and private practitioners – looking for a place to send folks who fall into the "justice gap." Of course, participants get a lot of referrals from their incubator peers and incubator alumni who practice in different areas of law.
Office Location

Each program was asked about the physical location of the incubator, and whether it is located on site or off, for instance, on or off campus for law school programs. For those with differing responses among them, the results are displayed in Charts #13 to #16 below. One-hundred percent of nonprofit programs, legal aid programs and programs run by private firms are located on-site of the operating entity. Four of the collaborations provided additional information about their physical locations, which vary: one is located in a law school, one is in a bar association, one is in a nonprofit, and one is in a law library, a first of its kind. (Charts 13-16: “Where is the incubator physically located?” n=16 (law schools); n=2 (bar foundations); n=9 (collaborations); n=4 (bar associations))

Programs were also asked if they share office space with any other entities. Sixty-one percent (28 programs) do not share office space, and for those 18 programs that do, some notable arrangements include: a membership-based co-worker space; being situated within the law school building that houses the law school clinics; and executive suites which are occupied by various other types of businesses.
Programs were further asked to categorize the physical location of the incubator, having to choose between “urban,” “suburban” or “rural.” Thirty-five (out of 46) programs identified as being geographically located in an urban area. Notably, one program included a text response clarifying that while it is located in an urban area, it primarily provides services in rural areas. Therefore, physical location may not necessarily be indicative of the areas served.

(Chart 17: “How would you categorize the location where the incubator is physically located? n=46)

**Budget and Costs**

Respondents were asked a series of questions about their budgets, contributions (both cash and in-kind) and costs. The first question asked for the incubator’s annual operating budget. Almost half of the programs (18; 46%) that responded to this question have annual budgets that are $50,000/year or less. The remaining 21 programs (54%) programs are spread fairly evenly across a number of other ranges, from $50,000/year to over $1,000,000/year, with no more than four programs per range. (Chart 18: “What is the incubator’s annual operating budget? n=39)

The survey went on to ask about the incubator’s sources of cash and in-kind contributions, requesting that they assign an approximate percentage to each given source. The following two charts display those results by operating entity type.
19. "What are the incubator's sources of cash contributions? Please assign an approximate percentage to each source below (must equal 100%). Do not include in-kind contributions"
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<th>Bar Assoc.</th>
<th>Bar Found.</th>
<th>Tech/Practice Mgmt. Vendors</th>
<th>Law Firms/Attorneys</th>
<th>Business Coaches</th>
<th>Legal Aid</th>
<th>Research Software Vendors</th>
<th>Law School Faculty</th>
<th>Mentors/Program Leaders</th>
<th>Legal Mktg. Vendors</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ave. %</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Min %</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<td>27.50</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Min %</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode %</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.88</td>
<td>16.25</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>11.25</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
20. "What are the incubator's sources of in-kind contributions? Please assign an approximate percentage to each source below (must equal 100%). Please include only goods and services (space, utilities and equipment) and not volunteer time from mentors, trainers, faculty, etc."

**Cash Contributions:** Most programs operated by law schools indicate that they receive at least some of their funding from the law school(s). However, this amount ranges from 15% of the total funds to 100%. There are also a few instances in which the law school program does not receive any funding from the law school(s), but rather from some other source(s). In these instances, funding comes primarily from foundation grants, and in one case, donations. Foundation grants are the second most common source of funding after the law schools themselves, and a few programs are additionally funded through revenue from the participants, client fees and law firms or attorneys.

Likewise, most programs operated by a bar association or bar foundation receives at least some of their funding from an association or foundation, ranging from 10% to 85% of the program’s total funds. However, there are a couple of instances in which funding comes entirely from alternative sources, such as a combination of foundation grants and revenue from participants. Another funding source for one bar foundation program was law firms or attorneys.

Programs run by nonprofits receive funding from a number of sources, including law schools, bar foundations, foundation grants, revenue from participants, client fees, donations, law firms or attorneys and other sources such as businesses and individual donors.

Programs operated by legal aid organizations receive 48% to 100% of their funding from legal aid. The second most common source for legal aid programs is revenue from the participants. One program’s funding, in addition to legal aid and revenue from participants, comes from law schools, foundation grants and cy pres awards.

Programs run by private firms are funded by law firms or attorneys, revenue from participants and legal aid, and to a lesser extent, client fees. Free-standing incubators are overwhelmingly funded by revenue from the participants and client fees, but also receive additional funding from other sources such as community contributions. Not surprisingly, the collaborations receive funding from a variety of sources. What is clear is that funding sources are diverse and that no two programs are the same. Sources of cash contributions are ever-evolving, and for many, financial stability is an ongoing effort.

**In-Kind Contributions:** Half of the programs operated by law schools receive 100% of their in-kind support from law schools, and one program receives 100% of its in-kind support from law school faculty. Three additional programs receive some of their funding from law schools, ranging from 30% to 85%.

Three-quarters of bar association programs receive at least some of their in-kind support from the bar association, ranging from 10% to 55% of the program’s total in-kind contributions, and all of them receive additional support from mentors or program leaders, ranging from 10% to 50%. Other sources include: law schools, technology and practice management vendors, law firms or attorneys (up to 40%), legal aid...
and research software vendor. Notably, one bar association program receives 90% of its in-kind contributions from an economic development corporation. Both bar foundation programs each receive at least some in-kind support from the bar foundation, ranging from 25% to 50%, and one receives the other 50% of its in-kind support from the bar association. Other main sources include: technology and practice management vendors (up to 25%), mentors and program leaders (up to 20%) and business coaches and research software vendors (up to 15% each).

One nonprofit program receives 100% of its in-kind contributions from a law school, and interestingly, three others responded that 100% of their in-kind contributions come from some other source(s) than those provided. One accompanying text response specifies that that the program does not receive in-kind contributions, and another specifies that an affiliated nonprofit is the source of all in-kind contributions. Other main sources include: technology and practice management vendors (up to 90%), bar foundations (up to 45%) and research software vendors (up to 20%).

One legal aid program receives 100% of its in-kind support from legal aid, and another receives 100% from a bar foundation. The third receives most of its funding from legal aid (67%) with a number of additional sources such as law firms or attorneys and mentors or programming leaders.

Both firm-operated programs receive 100% of their in-kind support from the law firm or attorneys. One free-standing organization provided that it does not receive any in-kind support, while the others receive most of it from law firms or attorneys (up to 100%) and law schools (up to 70%). Other sources of in-kind support for free-standing organizations are: technology and practice management vendors, research software vendors and mentors or program leaders. Like with cash contributions, collaborations receive their in-kind support from a variety of sources. However, the most common sources are law schools and bar associations. Specifically, five out of eight collaborations receive in-kind support from a law school, ranging from 10% to 100%, and half of the programs receive some in-kind support from a bar association, ranging from 20% to 45%. Other big contributors to collaborations are law firms or attorneys (up to 80%) and law school faculty (up to 70%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COSTS</th>
<th>Rent</th>
<th>Office supplies</th>
<th>Legal research service</th>
<th>Case mgmt. software</th>
<th>Malpractice insurance</th>
<th>Staff salaries</th>
<th>Marketing</th>
<th>Staff benefits</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N = 33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
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<td>$649</td>
<td>$73</td>
<td>$52</td>
<td>$160</td>
<td>$8,568</td>
<td>$158</td>
<td>$747</td>
<td>$244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min</td>
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<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<td>$0</td>
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<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max</td>
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<td>$8,969</td>
<td>$1,410</td>
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<td>$1,667</td>
<td>$111,886</td>
<td>$2,398</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
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</table>

21. "Over the past 6 months, what has been the average monthly cost for the incubator for each of the following…." n=33

Respondents were then asked about the programs’ average monthly costs over the past 6 months. Chart #21 above displays those results. On average per month, programs spend the most on staff salaries and rent, followed by staff benefits and office supplies. They spend the least on legal research services and case management software. “Other” monthly costs include: CPA bookkeeping, utilities, food and beverage, travel, fundraising, equipment and referral and intake software. Visual depictions of rent and staff salary responses are provided below to show outliers and extreme spreads in the data. (Charts 22 and 23: “Over the past 6 months, what has been the average monthly cost for the incubator for each of the following…Staff Salaries and Rent." n=33)
In addition to monthly costs, respondents were asked what their start-up costs were before commencing normal operations. Start-up costs for the majority of programs (22) that responded ranged from $0 to $10,000. Start-up costs for six other programs were $10,001 to $20,000. The remaining ten programs had start-up costs ranging from $20,001 to $100,000, with no more than three programs falling into any particular $10,000 range. (Chart 24: “How much were start-up costs before commencing normal operations?” n=40)

**Staff and Volunteers**

On average, programs employ approximately two full-time paid staff members. However, this number varies greatly from program to program, with many having as few as zero full-time staff members (14 programs) and one with as many as 18 full-time staff members. The majority (71%) of those with paid staff have 1 to 3 full-time equivalent employees. Eighty percent of the programs also have volunteer support. On average, programs have seven regular volunteers and 13 one-time or occasional volunteers. Like with staff, these numbers vary from program to program; the range for regular volunteers spans from 1 to 50, and for one-time volunteers from 10 to 33.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full-Time Staff</th>
<th>Regular Volunteers</th>
<th>One-time Volunteers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>n = 45</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 27</strong></td>
<td><strong>n = 29</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Min</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Max</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mode</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25. “How many full-time equivalent paid employees staff the incubator?” n=45; “How many volunteers have been/are involved with the program?” n=27 (regular volunteers); n=29 (one-time or occasional volunteers)
The programs with paid staff were asked the composition of staff. Law school staff and independent staff were the predominant responses. Here, “other” responses include resident and staff attorneys, access to justice commission staff and lawyer referral service staff. (Chart 26: “Who makes up the paid staff of the incubator?” n=31)

Typically, volunteers contribute training and mentoring, and to a lesser extent, administrative support. Text responses further revealed that volunteers also serve as board members, serve on admission committees, provide legal assistance to clients, assist with intake, and serve as program directors. (Chart 27: “How are volunteers involved?” n=37)

Volunteers contribute an average of 47 hours per month, but this number ranges from as few as two hours per month to as many as 300 hours per month, depending on the program. Chart #28 shows a more detailed breakdown of how many volunteer hours programs receive each month. (Chart 28: “On average, how many hours per month do volunteers dedicate to the incubator? (Total hours per month, all volunteers combined)” n=30)
Participant Fees

Just under half of the programs (21; 46%) require their participants to pay fees, including fees for rent. Typically, programs that do require fees require them on a monthly basis, but a handful also use a scaled system whereby the amount of fees required changes as the program progresses. No respondents indicate that their program requires fees on a six-month or annual basis, or via one flat fee. Some examples of scaled fee structures are:

- No fee for first six months; $250/mo. for second six months; and $500/mo. for final six months.
- No fee for first six months (and paid a $500 stipend); $250/mo. for second six months; and $500/mo. for second year.
- No fee for first three months; $250/mo. for months four through six; and $500/mo. for months 7 through 24.
- No fee for first 6 months; and $300/month for the next 12 months.
- No fee to start; and $50/mo. graduated increases up to a maximum of $500.
- No fee for first three months; $100/mo. for next three months; $200/mo. for next six months; and No fee for final year of two year term.
- $6,400 over two years, paid monthly, graduated from $50/mo. at the beginning to $500/mo. at the very end.

(Chart 29: "Are participant fees required..." n=21)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Fees</th>
<th>% Towards Rent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>$335.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30. “How much are participants required to pay per month?” n=12; “Approximately what percentage of the required fees go towards rent costs?” n=20

Monthly fees for participants are $335, on average, but can range from $100 to $500 per month. More programs require monthly fees from participants in the $300 to 400 range than any other. On average, approximately 57% of participant fees go towards rent costs, but this number can range from 0% to 100%. Interestingly, 15 out of the 20 programs that provided a response fall on either end of the spectrum; 100% of participant fees are earmarked for rent in eight programs, while only 0% to 20% of participant fees are earmarked for rent in seven other programs.
II. RESOURCES AND TRAINING

Resources Provided

Incubators arm participants with an array resources, services, education and support in order to prepare them to run their own sustainable solo and small firm practices. As such, respondents were asked a series of questions in order to learn more about which resources are most commonly provided, in which areas participants are typically trained, and how their mentorship programs function. First, of the list provided, almost all of the programs surveyed indicate that they provide mentoring as well as training or programming. The majority also provide networking opportunities, private meeting rooms, pro bono opportunities, case referrals, office supplies, CLE, legal research services, a firm mailbox or address and case management software. Forty-one programs either provide free or subsidized office space. While a handful of programs do provide for bar dues, malpractice insurance and a financial stipend, these offerings are less common. “Other” responses for resources and opportunities provided include salaries, website development, a website platform and online client intake. (Chart 31: “Which of the following resources and opportunities are provided to participants through the incubator? n=46)

Programs were also asked to identify the particular case management and legal research services they provide. In addition to in-house programs, programs equip participants with a number of different services, including but not limited to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Management Software</th>
<th>Legal Research Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amicus Attorney</td>
<td>BestCase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CaseManager</td>
<td>Bloomberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLIO</td>
<td>Casemaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>DirectLaw</td>
<td>FastCase</td>
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<tr>
<td>LegalServer</td>
<td>Lexis Advance</td>
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<tr>
<td>MyCase</td>
<td>LexisNexis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rocket Matter</td>
<td>OnLAW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smokeball</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

32. “Which case management software does the program provide? n=31;
   “Which legal research service does the program provide?” n=32
Furthermore, just under half of the programs (19; 43%) indicate that they provide some form of online training or programming. When asked the source of the online programming, programs predominantly responded with “bar associations” and “the Practicing Law Institute (PLI),” with many adding that these services are free for participants. Notably, one program is a partner of its bar association's Moderate Means Program which produces a series of free CLE webinars focused on low bono practices, and another utilizes its bar’s Moderate Means Program which produces a CLE series on meeting the needs of a growing moderate means population. Other online training sources include: Lawyers Mutual, YouTube, Clio and connecting offices via videoconferencing for weekly trainings.

**Do the incubator participants get any free or discounted services?**


*Justice Bridge:* Incubator participants in our program receive free memberships in a local bar association, free access to a leading on-line legal research database, discounted membership in a local law library, free subscriptions to a continuing legal education service and free access to case management software. In addition, they are eligible for discounts from a number of other vendors. The value of this package of benefits alone begins to approach the cost of their monthly membership fees.

*Center for Solo Practitioners:* Continuing Education of the Bar (CEB) provides one year of access to their OnLAW program to all participants for free. Lexis provides access to a basic research package to incubator participants for one year for free. CLIO and MyCase provide one year of free access to incubator participants.

*Legal Innovators for Tomorrow:* Free online legal research subscriptions, case management software, on-demand webinar training, and discounted legal technology consulting services. For a list of sponsors/partners: [https://www.lsba.org/LIFT/LIFTPartners.aspx](https://www.lsba.org/LIFT/LIFTPartners.aspx).

*Justice Entrepreneurs Project:* During their time in the incubator, participants have free access to legal research services, free case management software and document assembly tools, discounted malpractice insurance, free CLE, world class business development coaching, and all the food and beverage donations we can muster. For a list of partners, see [http://chicagobarfoundation.org/jep/partners/](http://chicagobarfoundation.org/jep/partners/).

**Training Areas**

Areas in which participants are trained, and the amount of time dedicated to a particular topic, are indicators of a program’s overall objectives. To get a sense of this, an additional set of questions was displayed to those who indicated they provide training and programming to participants. First, they were asked in which areas their programs provide training and programming. They were also asked to assign an approximate percentage of time devoted to each area. The following chart displays how many programs devote at least some amount of time to any particular area.
As seen above, more programs devote at least some training time to practice management, followed closely by substantive law and ethical issues. Note that “practice management” also includes business training and development, and specific topics such as finance, taxes and accounting. Many programs also devote at least some time to, in descending order, client development and marketing, client relations and retention, technology and compensation arrangements. “Community outreach” and “Delivery models” were chosen the least, but are still the subject of at least some training time for more than half of the programs.

However, while more programs devote at least some time to practice management, programs spend more time training participants on substantive law than on any other topic (25.2% on average). See Chart #34 which displays the amount of time spent in each area. However, these figures vary greatly from program-to-program. On one end, six programs do not spend any time training participants on substantive law, and on the other, two programs spend 100% of training time on substantive law. In the middle, nine programs spend 5% to 15% of training time on substantive law; 23 programs spend 20% to 40% of training time on substantive law; and five programs spend 50% to 60% of training time on substantive law.

Second to substantive law, programs dedicate 16.9% of training time, on average, to practice management. Program-to-program this ranges from 0% to 40%. The averages of the remaining topics fall below 11%, with delivery models and community outreach on the low end with 5.2% and 5%, respectively.
At least a few programs dedicate a significant amount of time to those subjects with relatively low averages. One program spends 45% of its training time on community outreach; one spends 35% of its training time on technology; and one spends 30% of its training time on delivery models. “Other” responses include: community education, courtroom procedure and the opportunity for participants to identify areas of interest and audit law school courses in those areas free of charge. (Charts 33-34: “Within which of the following areas does the incubator provide training and/or programming? Choose all that apply and please provide the approximate percentage of time devoted to the topic.” n=44)

**Training Topics and Community Outreach**

Respondents were then asked whether the incubator provides training or programming on a number of specific topics, primarily focusing on alternative compensation arrangements and delivery models. The goal was to get a sense of how many programs are preparing participants to expand their services beyond traditional representation at an hourly rate. More programs provide training on flat fees than the other options provided (30 programs out of 44), and many provide training on unbundling (27), sliding-scale fees (26) and community outreach (25). A good number of programs provide training on niche practices (21) and fee-shifting (17), and to a lesser extent, non-profit law firms (13). Only one program provides training on value adjustment lines. “Other” responses include: rural practice dynamics, gender violence protection and benefit corporations. (Chart 35: “Please indicate if the incubator provides training/programming on any of the following. Choose all that apply.” n=44)

![Training Topics Chart](image)

Another set of questions asked about the types of people or communities covered in the programs’ outreach or client development training. The predominant responses were “moderate-income,” “general,” and “low-income,” with 35, 32 and 32 affirmative responses (out of 44 total), respectively. A good number of programs also provide outreach or client development training on immigration (20), the elderly (14), the disabled (14), community groups (14), and to a lesser extent, rural populations (11) and veterans (11). Only a handful of programs provide training on medical-legal partnerships, active military and religious organizations. “Other” responses include: interpersonal violence survivors, medical marijuana organizations, home childcare providers and members of the LGBT community. (Chart 36: “Please indicate if the incubator provides outreach or client development training or programming on any of the following. Choose all that apply.” n=44)
The 44 programs that provide mentors (see Chart #31) were asked a series of follow-up questions on the topic. As demonstrated below, when asked what categories of people serve as mentors to participants, respondents most commonly chose “independent lawyer volunteers.” Further, text responses reveal that in at least one program, the Solo and Small Firm Practice Section of the bar, provides a mentor to each participant, and in another, incubator participants develop relationships through pro bono cases and the modest means panel of the local lawyer referral service. (Chart 37: “Who acts as mentors to the participants? Choose all that apply.” n=44)

Additional accompanying descriptions of the respondent programs' mentoring arrangements are rich in details such as: who the mentors are, how the relationships are formed, how often mentors and mentees meet, by what methods they meet, in which areas they assist, and much more. Organization varies: mentor-mentee relationships can be one-on-one, by group or a combination of both. They can be formal, with set meeting times (i.e. once a month) or arise when a participant has a question. They can be tailored to the participants' interests; they can be tailored to the practice areas of the program. At least one program's participants get CLE credits for every hour with a mentor. All in all, programs have developed robust mentorship programs that enable participants to grow successful practices by giving much-needed assistance and advice along the way. In an effort to assist programs with future or continued development of their mentorship structures, all of the text responses received are provided in full (with identifying language modified) in Appendix D.
Respondents were also asked whether or not the program will bring in a mentor who "specializes" in a particular area, or tailor programming to cover relevant issues, in order to respond to a participant’s focus or interest. Sixty percent of programs either bring in a mentor or tailor programming, 24% of programs do both and only 16% do not do either. Additionally, chart #38 shows that a few more programs bring in a mentor than tailor programming. (Chart 38: “When a participant has a particular focus or interest, the program will…” n=45)

III. CLIENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Services Provided

Incubators provide support and education to new attorneys so that they can provide affordable legal services to underserved populations. Respondents were asked to provide the approximate number of the following to date from all attorneys in the incubator:

(a) Number of consultations, including brief legal advice and information;  
(b) Clients accepted beyond an initial consultation;  
(c) Case files opened (number of individual cases, not clients); and  
(d) Number of referrals from the program provided.

The results from that moment in time are displayed in Chart #39. Note that these figures only represent 29 programs; therefore, if one were to extrapolate out to all 60 identified programs: 21,724 consultations; 11,087 clients; 12,319 cases; and 4,837 referrals had been provided thus far by incubator lawyers. Of course, projections of this nature are inherently limited by extreme variations and outliers that may drastically influence averages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultations</th>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>Case Files</th>
<th>Referrals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10,500</td>
<td>5,359</td>
<td>5,954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>362.07</td>
<td>184.79</td>
<td>205.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

39. “Please provide the approximate number of the following to date from all attorneys in the incubator…” n=29
Pro Bono and Moderate-Income Requirements

The majority of programs surveyed (31; 69%) require participants to do pro bono work, and just over half of the programs (24; 53%) require that participants take cases serving moderate-income clients. Programs that require pro bono were asked the number of hours expected over a given time frame. Pro bono requirements come in a variety of configurations: from one-case-a-year to set weekly, monthly and yearly requirements. Others expect that a certain percentage of the participants’ billable hours, such as 25% or even as high as 50%, will be dedicated to pro bono. Examples include: one case during program participation; 200 hours during 12 months; 20 hours a week for the first six months; 40 hours per month throughout the duration of the program; and a total of 450 hours over the course of the first six months and 50 hours for the remaining 12 months.

Programs that require participants to take cases serving moderate-income clients typically impose restrictions using the federal poverty guidelines, for instance, 200% to 400%, 125% to 500%, 250% to 350%, 200% to 450%, within 200%, less than 400%, and so on. Often, these are subject to local characteristics. At least one program has its income restrictions assigned by the courts or legal aid. Like pro bono requirements, some programs expect that a certain percentage of the participants’ billable hours are dedicated to “low bono” and others require that a certain number of hours be spent serving these types of clients. Some do not set specific guidelines; rather, they leave it up to participants themselves to determine whether or not a client qualifies for reduced fee, sliding scale, or fixed fee services, for example. In at least one instance, participants are required to sign up for a modest means panel. Another program provided details on its organizational clients, make sliding scale fees available for those with average annual budgets up to $1,000,000. Another program specified that serving moderate-income clients is, in fact, a full-time commitment. (Chart 40: “Does the program require participants to do pro bono work? If yes, please provide how many hours are required within a specified time frame?” n=45; Chart 41: “Does the program require participants to serve moderate-income clients? If so, what are the restrictions on client income?” n=45)
Compensation Arrangements

When asked the kinds of fee structures participants offer to clients, out of the 38 responses received, the results were as follows: participants in 31 programs offer flat fees; participants in 30 programs offer hourly rates; and participants in 24 programs offer sliding-scale fees. “Other” responses included repayment plans, fee-shifting arrangements, and contingency fees. Of course, this may only apply to some of the participants in any given program; there are varying degrees to which participants are expected or encouraged to offer such arrangements, and participants that operate as independent solos presumably have at least some freedom to set their own fees. (Chart 42: "Which of the following fee structures do the lawyers in the incubator offer to clients? Choose all that apply. For each fee structure available, please briefly describe the fee or range." n=38)

Some respondents provided additional details about compensation arrangements in accompanying text responses. Examples of flat fee arrangements include: $75 for a 1 hour consultation; demand letters on a limited scope basis for $250; $500 to $1500 on a limited scope basis; and $500 to $700 for uncontested divorces. Others specify that flat fee amounts depend upon factors such as service, practice area and complexity of the matter. Examples of sliding scales include: $60 to $145/hour based on 125% to 400% of federal poverty and $50 to $200/hour depending on income and assets. Others specify that the scales vary, that there are lower hourly rates with phased and/or capped fees, and that scales are dependent on factors such as the client's ability to pay, the client's self-reported household income and the number of individuals in the household and the types of services provided. Finally, examples of hourly rates span from $50/hour to $200/hour. Others specify that: $200 is the maximum; that hourly rates are discouraged; that hourly rates are simply reduced; and that hourly rates are adjusted based on client's ability to pay.

Please describe any alternative fees arrangements or delivery models that your participants offer to clients. How do these flexible arrangements fill a need in your community?

Justice Bridge: We are experimenting with a variety of efficient delivery techniques so that our attorneys can provide at least some service of significant impact within the limited budgets of modest means clients. These techniques include limited scope representation, fixed fee pricing, expedited mediations and conciliations in family law, preventative lawyering/early intervention programs in housing law, and the development of user-friendly guides on our client-facing portal/web site.
Lawyer Entrepreneur Assistance Program: The fee arrangements run the gamut from full scope representation to preparation of forms to one off limited scope appearances paid for in monthly installments. The attorneys’ flexibility is opening up new markets to a new segment of the population who otherwise would be unable to afford legal advice or representation.

Center for Solo Practitioners: The main type of alternative fee arrangement is “flat fees” and “payment plans” that are greatly reduced from the market rate in our community. There are many “working poor” in San Diego who can pay – and often want to pay – some amount for the services they receive, but there is no way that they can subject themselves to potentially unlimited hourly fees on a given legal matter. The lawyers in the incubator have represented many individuals on reduced flat fees / payment plans, providing these clients with legal representation they otherwise would not have received.

Legal Innovators for Tomorrow: Fee structures offered to clients include sliding scale/income based fees, flat fees for limited scope representation, and pricing models focused on representing clients in areas of the law in which fee shifting provisions are applicable. The fee structures offered fill in a major gap in making affordable legal services available for: 1) the Greater New Orleans community where median income per household is below 38,000, 2) Immigration legal services in Central Louisiana, and 3) underrepresented populations, like survivors of domestic violence and the LGBT community.

Justice Entrepreneurs Project: As one innovative practitioner said during a regular JEP training session, “the billable hour is dead, it just doesn't know it yet.” We do our best to help our participants price their services in ways that are affordable and accessible to regular people, whether that means fixed fees, payment plans, subscription models, or any of the other options mentioned in the Pricing Toolkit for attorneys seeking to serve low- and moderate-income clients, released by the Chicago Bar Foundation and JEP. We encourage innovation in this arena, and we’ve been impressed with participant developments so far.

Practice Areas

Less than half of the programs surveyed (18; 39%) have restrictions on practice areas. Some programs outline areas in which participants are not authorized to practice, such as: personal injury, patent law, criminal law, class actions and securities law. Others identify specific areas in which services are provided, such as: employment, immigration, landlord/tenant, small business, non-profit, special education, family, trusts, wills, estates, worker’s rights, domestic violence, divorce, custody, consumer issues, debt problems, workers’ comp, adult guardianship, small-estate planning, simple bankruptcy and criminal. Often, programs offer services in multiple areas, but a few programs focus on just one area of law, for example, immigration proceedings or environmental law. Others more generally state that the program focuses on the common legal needs of modest means populations, or the needs of low-income populations, and one program provides that practice areas are limited to the areas of law in which supervising attorneys have expertise. (Chart 43: “Is the incubator limited to certain practice areas?” n=46)
**Target Populations**

Respondents were then asked whether their programs focus on any particular populations. Overwhelmingly, respondents indicate that their programs focus on serving low-income clients and moderate-income clients. To a lesser extent, programs also focus on serving immigrants, the elderly, the disabled and veterans. Only two programs focus on serving active military, and two do not focus on serving any of the populations provided in the list. “Other” responses include: interpersonal violence survivors, minorities, members of the LGBT community and special education. (Chart 44: “Does the incubator focus on any of the following populations? Choose all that apply.” n=44)

![Bar chart 44: Target Populations](chart)

**Other Services**

Programs provide a number of other services to clients and the community in addition to representation, such as referrals, educational programs, services for non-English speaking clients, advocacy, legal information pamphlets and brochures and forms. Referrals and educational programs are at the high end with 27 and 21 programs indicating that they provide these services, respectively. In addition to English, programs offer services in: Arabic, Cantonese, Chaldean, Farsi, French, Gujarathi, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Urdu and Wikang Tagalog. (Chart 45: “Does the incubator offer any of the following services? Choose all that apply.” n=44)

![Bar chart 45: Other services provided](chart)
If you had to describe what makes the incubator valuable in 3 words, what would they be?

COLLABORATIVE  COMPASSIONATE  FORWARD-THINKING

JUSTICE  QUALITY  AFFORDABILITY

COMMUNITY  SUPPORT  CONFIDENCE

ACCESS  INNOVATION  CAMARADERIE

SUSTAINABLE  NETWORKED  OUTREACH

EMPOWERMENT  INNOVATION  COMMUNITY

INNOVATIVE  AFFORDABLE  NETWORK

IV. FUTURE OUTLOOK

Challenges

As demonstrated in Chart #46, sustainability is the greatest challenge facing an overwhelming number of programs. Interestingly, eight programs chose to write-in text responses instead of choosing one of the options provided. One program wrote that the biggest challenge is serving clients within their very limited budgets. Another wrote that the biggest challenge is having many more clients than resources. Another wrote that the biggest challenge is reaching clients in the justice gap. Others include: evaluation; participation and competence; and streamlining redundant processes. (Chart 46: “Which of the following is the most pressing problem facing the incubator?” n=45)
Respondents were also asked to rate each potential problem on a scale of: (a) “not at all challenging”; (b) “somewhat challenging”; (c) “challenging”; and (d) “very challenging.” Again, programs were far more likely to choose “sustainability” as either “challenging” or “very challenging.” Notably, every other category besides “sustainability” had less than 19 programs that considered it “challenging” or “very challenging.” (Chart 47: “Please rank the following to indicate how challenging each is/was for the incubator.” n=45)

47. Problems Ranked

![Bar chart showing the number of programs rating problems as challenging or very challenging.]

Future Consortium Projects

For more effective planning of Consortium activities, respondents were given a series of proposed projects and were asked to rate them on a scale of: (a) not at all useful; (b) somewhat useful; (c) useful; and (d) extremely useful. Below are the options they were given:

- A bibliography of published materials and helpful websites on solo/small law firm practice
- An open forum for posting new articles/essays;
- Bulletins regarding upcoming regional, national or international conferences of note;
- Guides to steps in starting and operating an incubator;
- Syllabi and course materials for J.D. law practice management curricula and for post-grad incubator/residency and non-profit programs curricula;
- Information on interactions with governmental agencies and NGOs on access to justice and access to law initiatives;
- Tools for evaluating and measuring success of programs and their participants;
- Special listserv for participants of Consortium Members;
- Ability to participate in a reciprocity agreement under which a grad from a Consortium Member law school that operates an incubator would be eligible to apply for admission to another Consortium Member incubator;
j. Group negotiations for free/discounted goods/services; inclusion in “collective bargaining” for free or discounted goods or services; and

k. Eligibility to obtain tools and assistance from a Consortium-organized best practices task force on effective uses of technology.

The responses indicate that programs are most interested in tools for evaluating and measuring success of programs and their participants, followed closely by: syllabi and course materials for J.D. law practice management curricula, post-grad incubator/residency and non-profit programs curricula; group negotiations for free/discounted goods/services and inclusion in “collective bargaining” for free or discounted goods or services; and eligibility to obtain tools and assistance from a Consortium-organized best practices task force on effective uses of technology.

On the other hand, programs are not as interested in the ability to participate in a reciprocity agreement under which a grad from a Consortium Member law school that operates an incubator would be eligible to apply for admission to another Consortium Member incubator, or bulletins regarding upcoming regional, national or international conferences of note. These findings will help steer the future activities of the consortium by substantiating what the programs find worthwhile and of value. (Chart 48: “Please rank the following indicating how useful each would be to your incubator.” n=45)

What advice would you give to those who are considering starting an incubator?

_Los Angeles Incubator Consortium_: Knowing the geography, demographics, and community organizations already serving your area is important, both to get buy-in and trust from the community, and also to know what needs to fill. A successful incubator relies on great collaborations.

_Justice Bridge_: To a great extent, starting a law incubator is a lot like starting any business. It is important to survey the existing market, assess needs, and develop a program from the grass-roots up that is tailored to providing benefits which are recognizable, affordable and of high quality. It is always sound to keep overhead costs down, to build upon a diversity of relationships, to broaden your business and income sources as much as possible, to grow in a balanced, steady way, and to develop metrics to measure and monitor progress for the benefit of your organizers, sponsors, participants and potential funders.

_Lawyer Entrepreneur Assistance Program_: Have the courage to simply try. At every step of the way, people have been willing to help out. If it seems overwhelming, start small and iterate. Our program started with a weekly clinic and continues to grow daily.

_Pitt Legal Services Incubator_: Assume that your target group consists of young lawyers with no money and big debt. Assume that they are looking for a program that won’t add significantly to their monthly expenses- ideally free office space, maybe modest fees that adjust upward as the lawyers begin to develop an income stream. Focus on the business side. That’s the hard part, harder than actually learning how to render the legal services.
**Center for Solo Practitioners:** If you are considering starting an incubator, I would recommend that you begin with a true incubator model and not a residency program or a hybrid. True incubators can be started without an extensive capital outlay and are sustainable by their very nature. Space options are usually available through a sub-lease from another lawyer or a non-profit organization, thereby obviating the need for the sponsoring organization to sign a lengthy and/or expensive master lease. In the sub-lease approach, the incubator lawyers can sign a sub-lease agreement directly with the sub-lessee. As with the sub-lease, most expenses should be kept to a minimum and borne by the incubator lawyers. The main expense for any organization starting an incubator program will usually be personnel cost, but even that can be minimized if you have someone on staff already willing and available to coordinate the incubator. Many other services, such as mentoring and continuing legal education, can be obtained for free or for a very low cost from two main categories of providers: (1) those wishing to help, give back, etc.; and (2) those wishing to market to incubator participants.

**Legal Innovators for Tomorrow:** Many different options for incubator models exist and thus it is important to conduct thorough research before deciding what model is best applicable to the forming organization's objective(s). We chose to operate under two models (Accelerator and Incubator Model) to allow for flexibility in adapting to the (sometimes changing) unmet legal needs throughout the state. The accelerator model is statewide and open to eligible attorneys practicing anywhere in the state while the incubator model focuses on a specific unmet legal need in a targeted location. Regardless of the model, however, some structural characteristics of the program remain the same – such as, the availability of certain free resources, technology training, networking and collaborative opportunities – to ensure the foundation for development of sustainable solo practices by participants. Helpful resources for those considering starting an incubator project include: ABA directory/profiles, ABA incubator listserv, an article called Encouraging the Development of "Low Bono Practices" by Luz Herrera, and the book "Reinventing the Practice of Law."

**Justice Entrepreneurs Project:** Do things different. Incubators are places to foster innovation, not the same old practice of law. Take advantage of the excitement and embrace the challenges that come with creating something new. It's also important to get as many stakeholders to the table as possible when starting off. The legal aid community, the private bar, funders, law schools, technology vendors – all have a role to play in an incubator's development and have important perspectives on where the incubator fits into the legal services delivery system.
CONCLUSION

As evidenced throughout this report, existing incubator programs vary in many respects. But while no two programs are identical, they all share a commitment to training new lawyers to become successful solo and small firm practitioners. More often than not, they share a dedication to access to justice for those of low and moderate incomes. This social justice component is evident all the way from the applicants they choose to the training they provide, the pro bono and moderate-income services they require, the areas in which they practice and the clients they target.

Furthermore, incubators are in a unique position to instill in new lawyers access to justice ideals and provide to them tools for innovation. And while a number of programs are in fact preparing their graduates to offer non-traditional compensation arrangements and delivery models, there is still room to grow in this area. Nevertheless, participating lawyers are undoubtedly making a significant impact in their communities, providing representation, referrals and other services to those who need it most. The value of preparing and enabling cohorts of new lawyers to continue their careers in service to underserved populations cannot be overstated. This impact on the access gap only stands to increase as programs reach their full potential and progress and as more programs continue to develop, especially if at a rate similar to that of recent years.

As seen above, sustainability is the greatest challenge incubators face. There were also a number of concerns surrounding the tremendous need in their communities for affordable legal services, and the inability of programs to adequately respond to that need due to lack of resources. Hopefully, this report will bring awareness to the incubator model as a viable and worthy investment. Ultimately, the hope is that more and more new lawyers will walk away with the tools and experience to do well by doing good.
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www.americanbar.org/delivery
APPENDIX A: Incubator Infographic with Map

The first law firm incubator launched in 2007. Today, there are over 60 existing or planned programs across 33 states and 4 countries. They are operated by law schools, bar associations, bar foundations, private firms, legal aid organizations, nonprofits and increasingly collaborations among many different entities.

Click to access the full, downloadable infographic.
## APPENDIX B: List of Incubators and their Operating Entities by Launch Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incubator for Justice: The City University of New York School of Law (CUNY)</th>
<th>September 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tulsa Immigrant Resource Network; University of Tulsa College of Law's Boesche Legal Clinic</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMKC Solo and Small Firm Incubator; University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law</td>
<td>January 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus Bar, INC</td>
<td>April 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>LawBridge Legal Residency Program at Florida International University College of Law</td>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Law Group; S. J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah</td>
<td>February 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Law Initiative (ALI); California Western School of Law</td>
<td>June 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace Community Law Practice; Pace University School of Law</td>
<td>September 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Practice Center; Charlotte School of Law</td>
<td>October 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Solo Practitioners; Thomas Jefferson School of Law</td>
<td>November 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solo &amp; Small Practice Incubator; IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law</td>
<td>November 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lawyer Entrepreneur Assistance Program (LEAP): Legal Aid Society of Orange County, University of California Irvine School of Law, Whittier Law School, Western State College of Law, and the Dale E. Fowler School of Law at Chapman University</td>
<td>January 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice Entrepreneurs Project; Chicago Bar Foundation</td>
<td>June 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Economies Law Center Fellowship Program</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Legal Development Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resident Associate Mentoring Program (RAMP); Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Justice Center of Long Island (CJCLI); Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center</td>
<td>November 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Legal Services</td>
<td>November 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland-Marshall Solo Practice Incubator; Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, Cleveland State University</td>
<td>January 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Month</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low Bono Incubator Program; Seattle University School of Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Innovators for Tomorrow (LIFT) Fellowship Program; Louisiana State Bar Association</td>
<td>February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associates Fellowship Program; Rutgers School of Law - Newark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to Justice Incubator; Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASU Alumni Law Group</td>
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<td>Midwest Center for Law and Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Law Fellowship; Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centro Comunitario de Servicios Legales (Community Legal Services Center) CECSEL, Dominican Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vermont Lawyer Incubator Project; The Vermont Bar Association and Vermont Law School</td>
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<td>Symbiosis Law School, Symbiosis International University, Pune, India</td>
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<td>Modest Means Incubator Program; California Lawyers for the Arts</td>
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<td>The New Solo Practitioner Incubator; Monterey College of Law</td>
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<td>Solo &amp; Small Firm Incubator Program; University of Detroit Mercy School of Law</td>
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<td>James E. Rogers Community Law Group; University of Arizona, James E. Rogers College of Law</td>
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<td>Public Interest Advocacy Clinic</td>
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<td>Whittier Legal Access Program; Whittier Law School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incubator Program; Loyola University New Orleans College of Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Widener University/Dauphin County Bar Association Incubator Program</td>
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<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Incubator Consortium; Southwestern, Pepperdine University and UCLA law schools; Los Angeles County Law Library; and five legal aid organizations: Bet Tzedek, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, Community Legal Services, Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles and Public Counsel</td>
<td>March 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhode Island Center for Justice; Roger Williams University School of Law Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern California Lawyer Access, Inc. (NCLA)</td>
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<td>RoyseLaw Community Legal Services; Royse Law Firm, PC</td>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
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<td>Maine Community Law Center</td>
<td>September 2015</td>
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<td>Akron Bar Association Incubator Program</td>
<td>September 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elon Law Legal Incubator; Elon Law School</td>
<td>October 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hawaii Emerging Legal Practitioners (HELP) Access to Justice Project; William S. Richardson School of Law, University of Hawaii / Legal Aid Society of Hawaii / Volunteer Legal Services Hawaii</td>
<td>October 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>BALI - Bay Area Legal Incubator; Volunteer Legal Services Corporation; the Alameda County Bar Association; University of California Hastings College of the Law; University of California, Berkeley School of Law; Golden Gate University School of Law; University of San Francisco School of Law; Santa Clara University School of Law; the Alameda County Law Library; and legal services providers</td>
<td>January 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lawyers for Family Justice; Family Justice Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Law Entrepreneurs for Access Program (LEAP); Civil Justice, Inc., the University of Baltimore School of Law, and the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law</td>
<td>January 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lawyers for Affordable Justice; Boston College Law School, Boston University School of Law, and Northeastern University School of Law</td>
<td>January 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pitt Legal Services Incubator; The University of Pittsburgh School of Law</td>
<td>January 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Court Square Law Project; New York City Bar Association and the City University of New York School of Law</td>
<td>February 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insaf Centre for Legal Excellence, Islamabad, Pakistan</td>
<td>February 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nova Southeastern University</td>
<td>Shepard Broad College of Law Legal Incubator</td>
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Lawyers for Equal Justice, Inc.; State Bar of Georgia, Supreme Court of Georgia, Atlanta Legal Aid Society, Georgia Legal Services Program, Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation, Georgia State University College of Law, Emory University School of Law, John Marshall Law School, University of Georgia School of Law, Mercer University Law School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incubator Program</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACTL/YLD/SCLS Incubator Pilot Program; South Carolina Access to Justice Commission</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<td>Texas Apprenticeship Program; Texas A&amp;M School of Law</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Law Practice Incubator (CLPI); Bar Association of San Francisco &amp; The Justice and Diversity Center</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<td>TU Law Co Op; University of Tulsa College of Law</td>
<td>October</td>
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<td>Entrepreneurs in Community Lawyering; New Mexico State Bar Foundation</td>
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<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborative Legal Incubator Program (CLIP); East River Legal Services</td>
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<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborative Community Law Initiative (CCLI)</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justice Legal Center at the Center for Family Justice</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incubator Residency Program; Mississippi College School of Law</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
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</table>

APPENDIX C: Incubators that Contributed to Features throughout Report

- **Los Angeles Incubator Consortium**: Southwestern, Pepperdine University and UCLA law schools; Los Angeles County Law Library; and five legal aid organizations: Bet Tzedek, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, Community Legal Services, Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles and Public Counsel
- **Justice Bridge Legal Residency and Incubator Program**: University of Massachusetts School of Law (UMass)
- **Lawyer Entrepreneur Assistance Program (LEAP)**: Legal Aid Society of Orange County, in collaboration with the University of California Irvine School of Law, Whittier Law School, Western State College of Law, and the Dale E. Fowler School of Law at Chapman University
- **Pitt Legal Services Incubator**: The University of Pittsburgh School of Law
- **Center for Solo Practitioners**: Thomas Jefferson School of Law
- **Legal Innovators for Tomorrow (LIFT)**: Louisiana State Bar Association
- **Justice Entrepreneurs Project (JEP)**: Chicago Bar Foundation

For a complete directory of programs and their profiles, visit the ABA Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Service’s [website](#) dedicated to incubators.
APPENDIX D: Mentorship Structures - Text Explanations

- Law school faculty provides practice management and client recruitment mentoring. Two independent solo practice attorneys receive free or reduced rent in the incubator in exchange for serving as on-site mentors.
- Daily contact with clinic faculty is available and other mentorships are arranged based on interest throughout the life of the program.
- Workshops and matched mentoring opportunities.
- Daily instruction in specially designed 12-credit post-doc curriculum; individual mentoring and guidance.
- The participants have access to one mentor that visits the office weekly for "office hours". There are other mentors available by phone and email.
- We match participants with mentors who share practice area interest and some personal characteristic that can help them build a relationship. The mentors and participants meet as needed throughout the year.
- We set up mentoring groups that meet once a month. Each group is focused around a practice area participants work in. Participants form relationships with mentors and reach out for support outside of the regular meetings.
- The Solo and Small Firm Practice Section of the bar is providing a mentor to each participant in the inaugural class. Depending on practice area selected, legal aid may provide mentors.
- Trial Advocacy
  - We have a primary mentor who mentors the cohort as a whole, meeting with them once a month and one-on-one in between those meetings on an average of two additional meetings per month (in addition to frequent phone calls and emails). This person mentors them in the area of law practice management. We also have other mentors who mentor the incubator attorneys in a particular substantive area that the incubatee is practicing. Because some incubatees practice in multiple areas, they may have multiple "substantive law" mentors. Our bar association has approved our mentor program to allow our mentors and mentees to get CLE credits for every hour they engage in a mentoring relationship (this is a new CLE rule effective this year). In addition to the law practice management mentor and the substantive law mentors, we also have a group/peer mentoring option for certain areas of practice (e.g., family, trust and estates and consumer). For example, we have an experienced family law attorney who meets with the incubatees who practice family law twice a month for a mini-training on a family law issue and to have a "staff meeting" where the incubatees can share (without naming names) about cases they need guidance with.
- In-residence mentoring by 15 mentors in two office locations on a regular weekly basis. On-call mentoring by an additional 30 mentors. All mentors have on average 30 years of legal experience.
- Four "mentor advisors," three paid lawyers and one law school faculty member, each responsible for one of the four primary practice areas. Each mentor advisor recruits volunteer mentors to assist. The mentor advisors also organize training sessions. Other faculty member volunteers also organize training sessions.
- Participants are connected with a mentor, who is provided through the local bar association.
- The program operates as a residential program. The participants are actually fellows for two years. The mentoring is done by law school faculty and other community lawyers.
• Our operational plan calls for individual lawyers in the area to be able to speak to incubator participants regarding law firm practice management and regarding substantive law and procedural rules in individual practice areas.
• On the job training by our directors and more seasoned attorneys.
• Incubator attorneys are paired up with a practicing attorney from the community who specializes in their chosen practice area.
• Program has a full-time director who provides day-to-day mentoring for participants and also utilizes attorneys and other professionals from the community to mentor/teach in particular areas.
• We select family law practitioners in the community to provide one-on-one mentoring to the participants at least once a month.
• There is a group of attorneys from the community who are interested in and supportive of the program. When incubator lawyers have a question on a particular area of law, that lawyer contacts one of the mentor lawyers for consultation.
• On site and through committee/bar involvement.
• The incubator helps connect the lawyers with experienced practitioners in the relevant practice area. The incubator lawyers provide assistance to the outside lawyers in exchange for the experience and training they receive. The outside mentor lawyers will also be a source of client referrals, hopefully, and a person to call with any relevant inquiry going forward.
• We have weekly "rounds" via phone conference with one law office faculty and one private attorney/bar association staff. We have periodic meetings for training on specific issues such as ethics, law office management, court staff relations and low-income programs. Private attorneys are available to assist in specific areas of the law.
• Weekly rounds are led by the law school faculty and bar incubator administrators. Targeted mentoring is provided by bar volunteers.
• Associates are mentored by supervising attorneys in specific practice areas. There is also a weekly educational component where associates receive training and education.
• Participants spend 5 to 10 hours per week with their matched clinical faculty or alumni-mentor in the mentor's solo or small practice firm. Time spent in the mentors' firms provide participants with additional experiential training, and assists in further enhancing participants' professional careers.
• Incubator director serves as a business coach and accountability coach to participants helping them set and achieve personal and business goals, track appropriate metrics, and discuss wins and challenges. Currently in the process of developing a mentor program by identifying experienced law school alumni who are willing to be available and matched with incubator participants based on practice areas.
• The participants are paired with practitioners in relevant subject areas.
• The 3 senior experienced attorneys (1 international and 3 national) were hired to supervise and mentor participants, while at the same time offering the participants substantial guidance in the practical management of their firms and in the handling of cases. The mentors are available to participants so that they satisfy the pupillage requirement to qualify for license. In addition, the mentors has given specialized course instruction in human rights litigation. The mentors are also facilitating frequent presentations and workshops that offer instruction in basic business kills relevant to a solo or small firm practice, such as financial management and marketing.
• The incubator has a dedicated residential mentor who is on-site approximately 20 hours per week. Bar leadership and association staff are available as needed.
• The director meets weekly with the entire cohort and then with each cohort member individually. In addition, the Director pairs each participant with mentors on an as-needed basis for specific cases. Oftentimes, these pairings result in longer-term mentoring relationships.
• Law Firms will establish an Advisory Council through which mentors will be assigned to fellows and practice groups assigned to help with specific cases as questions arise. Firms may also participate in training in areas of our focus.
• Our staff mentoring attorney is a resource available daily for substantive law and law practice management issues. She also uses her professional contacts and those of our collaborative partners to find attorneys with relevant knowledge to answer substantive law and law practice management questions on a daily basis. All attorneys are required to do a 20 hour a week, 6 month apprenticeship under the mentorship of an attorney performing pro bono work (typically at a nonprofit legal organization) in a substantive law area of interest. All attorneys are appointed at least one substantive law mentor that agrees to work with the participating attorney a minimum of 1 hour a week for a year.
• Participants receive mentoring and training in practicing law, consultation regarding the business and ethical considerations of setting up a solo practice, and affordable business space and overhead costs for the first year of practice. More importantly, program participants have had a quality learning experience by representing low-income clients in court with the benefit of supervision and mentoring by experienced public interest and private attorneys and a panel of retired and sitting judicial officers. Program participants gain legal experience by representing low-income clients in court with the benefit of supervision and mentoring by experienced public interest and private attorneys and a panel of retired and sitting judicial officers. This mentoring ensures both quality representation and a quality learning experience. New participants begin with a multi-day boot camp covering some of the most pressing areas to new solos, including malpractice insurance, managing client trust accounts, and marketing. Additionally, participants have access to monthly intensive trainings, how-to style YouTube videos, trainings, and an internal wiki dedicated to practical skills and substantive law relevant to the incubator’s practice areas.
• The Program Director is the primary mentor of the participant attorneys. Additionally, we have connected the attorneys with practice area specific mentors (volunteer independent solo and small firm attorneys).
• While the participants are in their first six months, they receive mentoring through the incubator staff, board members and local Lawyer Referral Service (LRS) attorneys on pro bono cases they take on. As they move into the modest means panel of our LRS program, they are expected to develop (with our help) a relationship with an attorney in a similar area of practice who agrees to provide mentoring.
• Since resident attorneys are considered employees, our permanent staff (managing attorney, senior attorney, staff attorney) provide direct supervision of residents’ case work and business planning/client development. We also encourage residents to develop interest in and clients in "alternative practice areas.” For those areas, we utilize volunteer mentor attorneys to ensure that residents are taking on an alternative practice area case competently.
• Fellows are supervised by a Director and also receive mentoring from volunteer lawyers in the community.