



APPLICATION GUIDE

Emergency litigation support



Introduction

This guide covers how to complete the application form for emergency litigation support and provides some tips and best practices to help you as you prepare your application.

In case you have more questions along the way, please reach out to DFF's Programme Officer at: **grants@digitalfreedomfund.org**

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01.

Applicant information

Next to “full name of applicant” write the name of the contact person for the application.

Next to “organisation”, write the name of the organisation on behalf of which you are applying. If applying as an individual, leave this space blank.

The DFF Programme Officer will provide the application number.



02.

Background

Why we ask

We are interested in funding cases that are built on a clearly identified digital rights issue, with evidence that the issue can be addressed through litigation. We need to understand the context of the case, the specific goals behind the litigation and how these goals contribute to the long-term objectives pursued by the digital rights field.

Recommended length

Maximum 900 words (or two pages)  

Examples of what we want to see here



The factual scenario/circumstances giving rise to your case.

Details on the parties to the litigation.

Details on any specific law, practice, action or decision that you seek to challenge through the case.

What impact you hope the litigation will achieve.

How the expected impact fits into any broader objectives or goals you/the digital rights field are pursuing (e.g. through advocacy/campaigning).

A brief outline of the key arguments you intend to make in your litigation.

The concrete, enforceable remedy/remedies you intend to seek in the proceedings.

What we don't want to see here



The general mission statement of your organisation.



03.

Urgent litigation activities

Why we ask

This section should clearly show us that an emergency grant application is justified (rather than going through our regular grantmaking process). You need to make the argument that there are specific, urgent, and non-movable litigation activities that must take place within the next twelve weeks.

Recommended length

½ page 

Examples of what we want to see here



A description of concrete litigation activities, and their deadlines, that must take place within the next 12 weeks (e.g. “a court appeal must filed by ... date”).

Justification that the urgent activities are required to achieve your long-term litigation objectives.

A description of the consequences of not carrying out these activities within the next 12 weeks.

What we don't want to see here



A general description of the litigation process and activities you will carry out.

Litigation activities that are not subject to any hard or pressing deadlines.



04.

Actions taken to secure *pro bono* lawyers

Why we ask

We aim to foster a strong pro bono culture in Europe and do not want to help create an ecosystem in which resource-light digital rights activists are being charged full corporate rates by law firms. If an applicant engages outside counsel, DFF will generally prefer that outside counsel work on the litigation *pro bono*.

Recommended length

½ page 

Examples of what we want to see here



A clear justification for working with external lawyers (i.e. no in house legal experts, in-house lawyers are not allowed to file cases in court, specific expertise needed, etc).

A description of specific actions taken to secure external lawyers working pro-bono, or at a reduced, capped or fixed fee, and what the external lawyers have agreed to.

If paying full fees, a clear explanation for why it was not possible to get a reduction.

What we don't want to see here



General statements about the specific context being difficult to find lawyers who will work for reduced fees.



05. Budget

Why we ask

We want to see that you have done a final check that the expenses you are asking for are fully explained and justified in the application. This is a chance for you to go back and check your budget again. In case any expenses are not elaborated in the application you can explain them here for clarity. Note that the budget should only include expenses related to the urgent activities you will carry out in the next 12 weeks. Any other litigation expenses should be part of a full strategic litigation application that you can submit to DFF separately.

Recommended length

¼ page 

Examples of what we want to see here



Expenses that relate specifically to direct costs needed to deal with urgent litigation activities that must take place in the next 12 weeks (i.e. court filing fees, translation costs, courier costs, etc).

Confirmation that you've checked the budget and are happy that all expenses are fully justified in the application.

An explanation of any expenses in the budget that may need clarification. For example, you might like to flag expense lines you want to discuss further (for increasing/decreasing).

What we don't want to see here



Any expenses that do not relate specifically to urgent litigation activities that must take place in the next 12 weeks (i.e. lawyer fees for the subsequent litigation, staff costs for ongoing coordination).



06.

Further information

Why we ask

Here you can add any further information you deem relevant that did not fit into the other sections of the application. You can leave this section blank if it is not relevant.

Recommended length

Maximum ½ page 



07. Appendices

Why we ask

We have designed this application form so that, if completed fully, we will not need any further information from you in order to assess the merits of your application. However, there may be situations where related documents and links will help elaborate or support your application. Therefore, you can list the documents you are sending along with the application here. You can leave this section blank if it is not relevant.

Recommended length

Maximum ½ page 

Examples of what we want to see here



A numbered list with a brief (no more than one sentence) description of each document appended.

Examples could include, draft legal documents, your litigation strategy for the case, your advocacy strategy for the case, memorandums of understanding with other organisations who will be involved in the litigation, documents proving the urgency of deadlines mentioned in the application, etc.

What we don't want to see here



General organisational strategy documents.

Research and strategy documents in languages other than English (instead provide English summaries if you think it is useful).

About the Digital Freedom Fund

The Digital Freedom Fund supports strategic litigation to advance digital rights in Europe. With a view to enabling people to exercise their human rights in digital and networked spaces, DFF provides financial support for strategic cases, seeks to catalyse collaboration between digital rights activists, and supports capacity building of digital rights litigators. DFF also helps connect litigators with pro bono support for their litigation projects. To read more about DFF's work, visit: www.digitalfreedomfund.org.

For questions concerning the application process, please contact:
grants@digitalfreedomfund.org

