

Nebraska Information Technology Commission

Project Proposal Form

**New or Additional State Funding Requests
for Information Technology Projects**

FY2005-07 Biennium

Project Title	Trial Court Automation Strategy
Agency/Entity	Nebraska Supreme Court

**Project Proposal Form
FY2005-07 Biennium**

About this form...

The Nebraska Information Technology Commission (“NITC”) is required by statute to “make recommendations on technology investments to the Governor and the Legislature, including a prioritized list of projects, reviewed by the technical panel, for which new or additional funding is requested.” In order to perform this review, the NITC and DAS-Budget Division require agencies/entities to complete this form when requesting new or additional funding for technology projects. For more information, see the document entitled “Guidance on Information Technology Related Budget Requests” available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/forms/>.

Electronic versions of this form are available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/forms/>.

For questions or comments about this form, contact the Office of the CIO/NITC at:

Mail: Office of the CIO/NITC
521 S 14th Street, Suite 301
Lincoln, NE 68508
Phone: (402) 471-3560
Fax: (402) 471-4608
E-mail: info@cio.state.ne.us

Submission of Form

Completed forms must be submitted by the same date biennial budget requests are required to be submitted to the DAS Budget Division. Completed project proposal forms must be submitted via e-mail to info@cio.state.ne.us. The project proposal form should be submitted as an attachment in one of these formats: Microsoft Word; WordPerfect; Adobe PDF; or Rich Text Format. Receipt of the form by the Office of the CIO will be confirmed by e-mail. If an agency is unable to submit the application as described, contact the Office of the CIO prior to the deadline, to make other arrangements for submitting a project proposal form.

Section I: General Information

Project Title	Trial Court Automation Strategy
Agency (or entity)	Nebraska Supreme Court

Contact Information for this Project:

Name	Frank E. Goodroe, Administrator
Address	1213 State Capitol Building
City, State, Zip	Lincoln, NE 68509-8910
Telephone	402-471-2643
E-mail Address	fgoodroe@nsc.state.ne.us

**Project Proposal Form
FY2005-07 Biennium**

Section II: Executive Summary

Provide a one or two paragraph summary of the proposed project. This summary will be used in other externally distributed documents and should therefore clearly and succinctly describe the project and the information technology required.

JUSTICE, the current trial court automation system, was designed and built in the early 1990s. Dramatic changes in technology have occurred, but JUSTICE has not been modified to include many of those advances. The Court asks for funds to retain an expert, independent consultant. The result will be a review of how well JUSTICE satisfies the needs of trial courts, and will provide guidance in deciding how long to expect to continue to use JUSTICE and when the Court should move to a new automation system using the latest technology.

Section III: Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes (15 Points)

1. Describe the project, including:
 - Specific goals and objectives;
 - Expected beneficiaries of the project; and
 - Expected outcomes.

Goals and objectives:

- A. Identify current requirements of Nebraska's trial courts.
- B. Perform a 'gap analysis' to determine how well JUSTICE and court systems which are widely available and well supported meet those requirements.
- C. Analyze the costs of changing JUSTICE to meet the requirements
- D. Analyze the costs of licensing other software, making any needed modifications, and acquiring needed hardware and related software, training employees, and supporting the conversion of data and installation in trial courts.
- E. Analyze the methods and costs of providing help desk services, ongoing training and support, and hardware and software maintenance and replacement for each alternative.

Project Beneficiaries:

- A. Trial courts will benefit by working with an automation system which meets their requirements.
- B. Taxpayers will benefit by supporting the least expensive computer system which satisfies the requirements of the trial courts, and potentially by reducing the labor cost of processing court cases.
- C. Judges will benefit by having a system which meets their requirements; JUSTICE was not designed for judges, so most of the trial judges' needs have not been satisfied.
- D. Litigants will benefit if new system functions result in reduced time and cost in deciding cases.

Project Outcomes:

Analysis of court automation standards proposed by the National Center for State Courts, Federal requirements, State requirements, recommendations by the National Center for Juvenile Justice, accompanied by thorough exploration of the needs of judges and court employees in Nebraska trial courts. The recommendations must result in a 'best practices' recommendation, tempered by the real-world experience of the people who are doing the job.

The recommendation will allow the Supreme Court to decide the future of trial court automation in Nebraska, and should provide a smooth transition to retain the consultant to prepare a request for proposals (RFP) and evaluate proposals which are submitted in response, if that is the recommendation of the report. If the report recommends modifications to JUSTICE, the JUSTICE team will have a clear blueprint of needed work and of priorities to assign the work.

2. Describe the measurement and assessment methods that will verify that the project outcomes have been achieved.

**Project Proposal Form
FY2005-07 Biennium**

Experienced court staff will maintain contact with this vendor through all stages of the project.

3. Describe the project's relationship to your agency comprehensive information technology plan.

This project will determine the content of future information technology plans.

Section IV: Project Justification / Business Case (25 Points)

4. Provide the project justification in terms of tangible benefits (i.e. economic return on investment) and/or intangible benefits (e.g. additional services for customers).

Consultants from the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ), in separate efforts, have suggested JUSTICE falls short of meeting the needs of the trial courts. The NCSC reviewers said other trial courts have found they have saved significant amounts of money by using trial court automation systems available now through vendors. It is not clear that this recommendation applies to a statewide system.

It is clear the Juvenile case type within JUSTICE must be modified to better support the Separate Juvenile Courts which will begin to use the system, and the JUSTICE team has just begun to address the information needs of judges, as JUSTICE was designed to be a system for court clerks' use. There is clearly a limit to the effective useful life of any automation system, but there is no built-in timer to signal when that limit is reached. The Supreme Court wishes to obtain enough information to make a sound automation business plan.

5. Describe other solutions that were evaluated, including their strengths and weaknesses, and why they were rejected. Explain the implications of doing nothing and why this option is not acceptable.

This project will provide the evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions. Doing nothing, if the consultants are correct, may be costly to taxpayers by leading to higher automation costs than are necessary and by requiring greater expenditures than necessary for labor.

6. If the project is the result of a state or federal mandate, please specify the mandate being addressed.

This analysis will include the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) requirements.

Section V: Technical Impact (20 Points)

7. Describe how the project enhances, changes or replaces present technology systems, or implements a new technology system. Describe the technical elements of the project, including hardware, software, and communications requirements. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed solution.

This project will evaluate the best ways to enhance, change or replace the current trial court case management system, and will consider hardware, software, and communications alternatives.

8. Address the following issues with respect to the proposed technology:

- Describe the reliability, security and scalability (future needs for growth or adaptation) of the technology.

**Project Proposal Form
FY2005-07 Biennium**

- This analysis must examine reliability, security and scalability; the option selected by the court must meet all of these requirements. It may be JUSTICE does not now adequately meet this requirement.
- Address conformity with applicable NITC technical standards and guidelines (available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/>) and generally accepted industry standards.
 - Again, this analysis must consider this issue, and must be driven by industry standards.
- Address the compatibility with existing institutional and/or statewide infrastructure.
 - This analysis must assure these requirements are met.

Section VI: Preliminary Plan for Implementation (10 Points)

9. Describe the preliminary plans for implementing the project. Identify project sponsor(s) and examine stakeholder acceptance. Describe the project team, including their roles, responsibilities, and experience.

This effort will be sponsored by the Nebraska Supreme Court through Frank E. Goodroe, State Court Administrator. The effort will include work with stakeholders (judges and trial court clerk's office staff, and other court support staff), which should result in stakeholder acceptance of the recommendation.

The State Court Administrator will appoint a team to prepare a request for proposals for this work and evaluate responses; this team will work with the selected vendor to establish a work plan and assist in making resources available for this evaluation.

10. List the major milestones and/or deliverables and provide a timeline for completing each.

Major milestones include preparation of the RFP, receiving proposals, evaluating the proposals and selecting a vendor, and establishing a work plan for the project with the vendor. This team must assure the work is progressing and will be complete when called for in the work plan.

11. Describe the training and staff development requirements.

Training and staff development requirements must be addressed in this analysis.

12. Describe the ongoing support requirements.

Ongoing support must be addressed in this analysis.

Section VII: Risk Assessment (10 Points)

13. Describe possible barriers and risks related to the project and the relative importance of each.

- A. The selection of a skilled, impartial vendor to do the work of this project is crucial. A serious mistake selecting the vendor could result in recommendations which are not sound.
- B. Work to enhance the JUSTICE system will be slowed or stopped during this evaluation. If it is not possible to act quickly on the recommendations of this study, courts may be without needed enhancements for many months or years. This could be worse than not doing the study.

Project Proposal Form
FY2005-07 Biennium

C. Court staffing, especially for county courts, is less than needed to allow the courts to complete work in a timely fashion. This analysis will require many hours of the time of the best and most experienced judges and court staff to provide the consultants with information about the courts' needs. Courts which must decide whether to participate in a study or get the work done may well choose to do the work. This can leave the study without access to the resources needed to complete the project.

14. Identify strategies which have been developed to minimize risks.

Many of the risks identified are difficult or impossible to mitigate. To the extent possible, the State Court Administrator will provide temporary court staff to allow senior staff to participate in sessions with the consultant to define the needs of the trial courts.

**Project Proposal Form
FY2005-07 Biennium**

Section VIII: Financial Analysis and Budget (20 Points)

15. Financial Information

Financial and budget information can be provided in either of the following ways:

- (1) If the information is available in some other format, either cut and paste the information into this document or transmit the information with this form; or
- (2) Provide the information by completing the spreadsheet provided below.

Instructions: Double click on the Microsoft Excel icon below. An imbedded Excel spreadsheet will be launched. Input the appropriate financial information. Close the spreadsheet. The information you entered will automatically be saved with this document. If you want to review or revise the financial information, repeat the process just described.



Excel Spreadsheet
(Double-click)

Financial information appears at the end of the document.

16. Provide a detailed description of the budget items listed above. Include:

- An itemized list of hardware and software.
- If new FTE positions are included in the request, please provide a breakdown by position, including separate totals for salary and fringe benefits.
- Provide any on-going operation and replacement costs not included above, including funding source if known.
- Provide a breakdown of all non-state funding sources and funds provided per source.

17. Please indicate where the funding requested for this project can be found in the agency budget request, including program numbers.

Nebraska Information Technology Commission
Project Proposal Form
Section VIII: Financial Analysis and Budget

(Revise dates as necessary for your request.)

	Estimated Prior Expended	Request for FY2005-06 (Year 1)	Request for FY2006-07 (Year 2)	Request for FY2007-08 (Year 3)	Request for FY2008-09 (Year 4)	Future	Total
1. Personnel Costs							\$ -
2. Contractual Services							
2.1 Design							\$ -
2.2 Programming							\$ -
2.3 Project Management							\$ -
2.4 Other	\$ -	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 125,000.00	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 250,000.00
3. Supplies and Materials							\$ -
4. Telecommunications							\$ -
5. Training							\$ -
6. Travel							\$ -
7. Other Operating Costs							\$ -
8. Capital Expenditures							
8.1 Hardware							\$ -
8.2 Software							\$ -
8.3 Network							\$ -
8.4 Other							\$ -
TOTAL COSTS	\$ -	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 125,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250,000.00
General Funds		\$ 125,000.00	\$ 125,000.00				\$ 250,000.00
Cash Funds							\$ -
Federal Funds							\$ -
Revolving Funds							\$ -
Other Funds							\$ -
TOTAL FUNDS	\$ -	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 125,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250,000.00