

# Shri B.R. Ambedkar Grant for Legal Aid and Awareness

By Vidhi Vimarsh Initiative

## POLICY DOCUMENT

### 1. Preamble

Access to justice is a fundamental right enshrined in the Constitution of India and a cornerstone of democracy. Yet, for many marginalized, rural, and economically disadvantaged communities, legal remedies remain inaccessible due to lack of awareness, resources, and representation. The *Vidhi Vimarsh Initiative*, through the *Shri B.R. Ambedkar Grant for Legal Aid and Awareness*, seeks to bridge this gap by empowering law schools and their legal aid clinics to become vibrant centers of community outreach, legal empowerment, and social change.

This policy document outlines the mission, objectives, activities, eligibility, grant structure, monitoring mechanism, and procedural requirements for participation. It is intended as a guiding framework for law schools to engage meaningfully in legal aid and awareness work while also strengthening the practical learning of their students.

### 2. Mission for Law Schools

The mission of the *Shri B.R. Ambedkar Grant* is twofold:

1. **Educational Mission:** To create an enabling platform for law students to gain hands-on experience in legal aid, advocacy, community engagement, and policy research, thereby enhancing their professional competence, ethical grounding, and social responsibility.
2. **Social Mission:** To promote legal literacy, foster access to justice, and enable communities to understand and assert their rights through structured awareness programs, outreach activities, and accessible dispute resolution mechanisms.

Law schools are uniquely positioned to contribute to both these missions because they combine academic expertise, youthful energy, and institutional credibility. Through this grant, they will be supported in taking legal knowledge beyond the classroom and into the communities that need it most.

### 3. Key Objectives

The key objectives of this initiative are as follows:

- **Strengthening Legal Aid Infrastructure in Law Schools:** Providing financial and strategic support to legal aid cells so they can expand their reach and quality of service.
- **Promoting Community-Centric Legal Literacy:** Designing and delivering programs that explain legal rights and responsibilities in simple, local languages.

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- **Encouraging Field-Based Learning:** Creating opportunities for students to engage directly with real-world legal problems, thereby improving their research, drafting, and advocacy skills.
- **Encouraging Innovative Methods of Awareness:** Incorporating modern tools such as digital campaigns, street plays, and audiovisual materials alongside traditional awareness drives.
- **Fostering a Culture of Pro Bono Service:** Instilling in students the value of free legal aid and volunteerism as an ethical duty of the legal profession.
- **Enhancing Dispute Resolution Mechanisms:** Educating communities about mediation, conciliation, arbitration, and other forms of ADR to reduce litigation burden and resolve disputes amicably.
- **Integrating Legal Aid with Emerging Challenges:** Including topics such as cybercrime, online fraud, digital rights, and environmental law within outreach programs.

## 4. About the Initiative

The *Vidhi Vimarsh Initiative* was conceived with the vision of democratizing access to legal knowledge and promoting grassroots advocacy. Recognizing that the law serves its true purpose only when it reaches the last person in society, Vidhi Vimarsh works to strengthen the interface between legal education and community needs. The Vidhi Vimarsh Initiative functions under the umbrella of LexPacto Edutech Pvt. Ltd. It is committed to advancing legal education, awareness, and access to justice through structured programs, grants, and community outreach.

The initiative collaborates with academic institutions, civil society organizations, and government agencies to organize a range of activities including research projects, awareness campaigns, skill-building workshops, and policy dialogues. Over the years, it has facilitated numerous programs that have empowered students, improved public understanding of laws, and encouraged citizen participation in governance.

With the *Shri B.R. Ambedkar Grant for Legal Aid and Awareness*, Vidhi Vimarsh intends to provide targeted support to law schools for undertaking sustained, impactful legal outreach. This support includes not just financial assistance but also academic guidance, monitoring, and networking opportunities to ensure that funded projects are both effective and replicable.

## 5. About Shri B.R. Ambedkar

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891–1956) was a towering figure in India's struggle for equality and social justice. Born into a marginalized community, he overcame immense social and economic barriers to become one of the most distinguished jurists, economists, and political thinkers of his time. His role as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian

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Constitution cemented his place as the principal architect of the constitutional framework that guarantees fundamental rights, directive principles, and safeguards for vulnerable groups.

Dr. Ambedkar's advocacy extended beyond constitutional drafting; he championed the causes of labor rights, women's equality, education for all, and eradication of untouchability. He believed that true freedom could only be achieved when citizens were not only politically enfranchised but also socially and economically empowered. His famous assertion that "educate, agitate, organize" remains a rallying cry for movements seeking justice and dignity.

The *Shri B.R. Ambedkar Grant for Legal Aid and Awareness* honors his legacy by promoting the very values he stood for—liberty, equality, fraternity, and access to justice for all, especially the most disadvantaged.

### 6. Activities to be Undertaken

Participating law schools selected under the *Shri B.R. Ambedkar Grant for Legal Aid and Awareness* shall undertake activities in two distinct categories:

#### 6.1 Activities to be Conducted by the Vidhi Vimarsh Initiative (at No Cost to the Institution)

The institution shall permit and facilitate the Vidhi Vimarsh Initiative's designated team members to organize the following programs **in an online format** for the benefit of students, faculty, and other stakeholders:

1. **One Webinar** – A thematic session on a relevant rights-based or legal literacy issue.
2. **One Certificate Course** – A structured, short-term course aimed at enhancing participants' legal knowledge and awareness.
3. **One Training Workshop** – A focused skills session designed to build capacity in a specific area such as client counseling, dispute resolution, or legal documentation.

**Funding Responsibility:** Every expense related to these activities—such as honorarium for speakers, advertisement and promotion, online platform fees, and other logistical costs—shall be borne entirely by the Vidhi Vimarsh Initiative **in addition to the INR 20,000 grant amount** provided to the law school.

**Revenue Clause:** If the above activities generate any revenue for the institution (through participant fees or otherwise), the total revenue collected shall be transferred to the Vidhi Vimarsh Initiative **after deducting actual expenses incurred by the institution, if any.**

#### 6.2 Activities to be Funded through the Research Grant

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The research grant amount of **INR 20,000** provided to the law school shall be utilized to undertake the following activities:

1. **Awareness Drives** – Door-to-door campaigns, school visits, and/or public meetings to educate people about their rights and legal remedies.
2. **Street Plays and Cultural Activities** – Using art, theatre, and local cultural expressions to communicate legal concepts in an engaging and accessible manner.
3. **Creation of Online Resources** – Designing infographics, short videos, and other digital content on selected topics, and uploading the same for public access.
4. **Targeted Activities for Marginalized Communities** – Special programs for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, women, persons with disabilities, and economically weaker sections.

### Implementation Note:

Each activity listed above shall be carried out in the manner prescribed by the Vidhi Vimarsh Initiative or in any other manner deemed appropriate by the institution, provided it aligns with the objectives of the grant.

## 7. Scope of the Grant

The grant shall cover expenditure directly related to the execution of the approved activities, including:

- Printing and distribution of awareness material.
- Honorarium for guest speakers, trainers, and community facilitators.
- Venue booking, logistics, and refreshments for events.
- Travel expenses for outreach teams.
- Development of audiovisual and digital content.
- Research-related expenses, including data collection and field visits.

The grant **shall not** be used for:

- Routine administrative expenses of the institution.
- Purchase of assets unrelated to the project.
- Payment of salaries to permanent faculty or staff.

## 8. Procedure to Apply

### 1. Initial Application:

- Fill out the designated Google Form: <https://forms.gle/AYgwfa5fT4Xr7yFN6>
- Include details of past legal aid and awareness activities undertaken by the institution.

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- Provide a tentative plan for the proposed project under the grant.
- 2. **Shortlisting:**
  - Applications will be evaluated based on past performance, proposed plan, feasibility, and potential impact.
  - Shortlisted institutions will be notified within 7 working days after the application deadline.
- 3. **Declaration Submission:**
  - Shortlisted institutions must submit a formal declaration signed by the Head of Department or Head of Institution within 7 working days of intimation.
- 4. **Commencement of Activities:**
  - Activities must begin no later than 1 September 2025.

**Note:** A maximum of only two (2) law schools will be selected for the Shri B.R. Ambedkar Grant for Legal Aid and Awareness in the current cycle, based on merit, quality of proposal, and demonstrated capacity to execute the planned activities.

## 9. Role and Responsibilities of the Law Schools

Selected law schools shall:

1. **Develop a Detailed Activity Plan** within two weeks of grant approval, specifying timelines, locations, target groups, and expected outcomes.
2. **Form a Project Team** consisting of faculty coordinators, student volunteers, and, where necessary, external experts.
3. **Ensure Community Participation** by involving local leaders, NGOs, and self-help groups in program planning and execution.
4. **Maintain Financial Discipline** by keeping accurate records of grant expenditure supported by bills, receipts, and vouchers.
5. **Submit Progress Updates** including photographs, participant lists, and interim reports during the project period.
6. **Ensure Compliance with Ethical Standards** by respecting privacy, obtaining informed consent from participants, and avoiding any form of discrimination.

**Note:** All participating law schools shall ensure that every team member actively involved in the project receives an official certificate of participation issued jointly by the Vidhi Vimarsh Initiative and the institution, acknowledging their contribution to the Shri B.R. Ambedkar Grant for Legal Aid and Awareness.

## 10. Monitoring and Review

- **Mid-Term Review:** Vidhi Vimarsh will conduct a review in November 2025 based on interim progress reports and, if necessary, virtual inspections.

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- **Final Review:** Law schools must submit a **Final Report by 15 January 2026** using the prescribed format, which will include:
  - Summary of activities undertaken.
  - Quantitative data (number of participants, locations covered, materials distributed).
  - Qualitative assessment (impact stories, feedback received).
  - Financial statement with Utilization Certificate
- The second installment of the grant will be released only upon satisfactory completion of the mid-term review.
- Institutions failing to submit reports or comply with requirements may be asked to return the grant amount and will be ineligible for future funding.

### 11. Grant Disbursement Structure

- **Total Amount:** INR 20,000 per selected institution.
- **Instalment 1:** INR 10,000, released within 15 days of the start date (1 September 2025).
- **Instalment 2:** INR 10,000, released on or before 5 November 2025, subject to satisfactory progress.

### 12. Timeline

Activity	Date
Application Deadline	25 August 2025
Announcement of Shortlisted Institutions	Within 7 working days after deadline
Submission of Declaration by HOD	Within 7 working days of shortlisting
Project Start Date	1 September 2025
Mid-term Review	November 2025
Second Instalment Release	On or before 5 November 2025
Final Report Submission	15 January 2026

**Note:** For any queries, you may contact us at [vidhivimarshinitiative@gmail.com](mailto:vidhivimarshinitiative@gmail.com)