Charleston School of Law – Public Policy Institute
Request for Proposals (RFP): Community Policy Research Projects

Issue Date: September 28, 2026
Submission Deadline: November 6, 2026 @ 5 pm

Overview:
The Public Policy Institute at Charleston School of Law is a collaborative community initiative to advance nonpartisan, evidence-based solutions to pressing societal challenges. The Institute invites community organizations, nonprofits, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders serving the public to submit proposals for policy issues they would like law students to research and analyze. This initiative provides an opportunity for students to engage in meaningful, data-driven legal and policy work while helping community partners develop actionable solutions.

Purpose:
The goal of this initiative is to connect law students with real-world policy challenges that impact our community. Selected partners will benefit from pro bono student work, including:

- Legal and policy research;
- Data and regulatory framework analysis;
- Development of evidence-based policy recommendations; and
- A written and oral presentation of findings.

Eligibility:
Proposals are welcome from:

- Nonprofit organizations;
- Trade associations;
- Nongovernmental organizations;
- Educational institutions;
- Community advocacy groups; and
- Other entities engaged in public service.

Proposal Requirements:

Submissions should include the following:

1. **Organization Information:** Name, mission, point of contact, and a brief description of your organization's activities.
2. **Policy Issue Description:** Clearly outline the policy challenge, including background, scope, why it is significant to the work of your organization, and the larger implications for the community.

3. **Expected Outcomes:** Describe what you hope students will accomplish through their research and analysis and what objectives you hope to achieve through participating in this program.
4. **Resources and Support:** Indicate any materials, data, or access students may need to complete the project, as well as desired frequency of check-in.
5. **Other Information**: Please include any other information that you believe will be relevant in assessing this proposal.

All projects will be conducted over the course of a single semester (16 weeks). Selected partners should work with their student research team to establish a timeline of deliverables within this timeframe.

Selection Criteria:
Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Relevance and importance of the policy issue to the community;
- Feasibility for law student research and analysis under the given time constraints;
- Potential impact of proposed outcomes; and
- Clarity and completeness of the proposal.

Submission Instructions:
Please submit proposals electronically to PPI Director, Jennifer Wilkins, at JWilkins@charlestonlaw.edu with the subject line: "**Spring 2027 Community Partner Proposal**". All submissions must be received by **5 pm on Friday, November 6th.** Submissions received after the deadline will not be considered for Spring 2027 projects. Applicants may resubmit proposals for consideration for subsequent semester projects upon the release of a new RFP.

Questions?
For inquiries, please contact:

Jennifer Wilkins, Director of PPI

JWilkins@charlestonlaw.edu

(843) 377-2158

Additional Information:
Selected projects will be assigned to law student research teams under the supervision of a licensed attorney. Students will present their findings to their assigned community partners through the preparation of a report or policy brief as well as an oral presentation of findings.

We look forward to partnering with community leaders to advance thoughtful, actionable policy solutions that make a meaningful difference in South Carolina.