



GROWING EQUALITY, FUNDING CHANGE

# Social Change Fund Planning Grants

## Guidelines and Online Application Instructions

**OVERVIEW** — THE WOMEN'S FOUNDATION OF MINNESOTA is a community foundation that grows equality for women and girls in Minnesota by funding innovative social change programs, building women's philanthropy, conducting and reporting on research, advocating public policy, and educating the public about the successes and challenges of Minnesota's women and girls.

The Foundation's **Social Change Fund** awards grants to Minnesota nonprofits seeking to remove barriers to equality for women and girls in their communities through "social change" – shifting attitudes and behaviors, or institutions and policies that limit equality. We partner with organizations serving women statewide to create solutions that are vital and relevant for their own communities.

We offer multi-year grants within our Social Change Fund. The upcoming grantmaking period is as follows:

Grant Type	Request for Proposal Available	Proposal Deadline	Grant Period
Planning Grants	November 15, 2011	January 19, 2012	April 1, 2012 - August 30, 2012
Multi-Year Grants (up to 3 years of funding)	July 2, 2012	October 1, 2012	February 1, 2013- January 31, 2016

Planning grants provide short-term funding to support plans for new project work or to increase a gender lens within an organization's programming. Planning grants are offered to help position organizations for multi-year grant awards.

## Planning Grants



### Types of Funding

Planning grants may result in creation of a proposal for a three-year Social Change Fund implementation grant and/or to seek additional funding from other sources, as follows:

1. **Planning of new programming** to build equality for women and girls within an existing organization.
2. **Planning the development of a public policy initiative/agenda** focused on a social change goal that builds equality for women and girls.
3. **Planning to focus organizational capacity** on the achievement of social change outcomes benefiting women and girls.

### Focus & Outcomes

The Social Change Fund advances women's human rights to ensure that women are free from discrimination and able to act upon their dreams. We believe that problems and solutions are found in the same place. We apply a gender, place, race, age, and equity lenses to our grantmaking.

The Social Change Fund focuses on supporting programs to impact **one of the following four Outcomes of Social Change:**

#### 1. Create Economic Justice for women

Women have increased economic opportunity and fairness because of access to education, employment opportunities, availability of child care, and workforce development.

#### **Examples of Indicators or Strategies:**

- Adequate social safety net services assure economic self-sufficiency, through child care, housing, and educational access, and workforce development.
- Decreased pay gap: between men and women, between white women and women of color.
- Full and equal access to educational and employment opportunities for women and girls.
- Decreased discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, legal status, ability and other systems that oppress women.

## 2. Advance women's Safety and Security

Women have the right to experience the world as a safe place.

### **Examples of Indicators or Strategies:**

- Models and policies make safe, affordable, livable housing available to women and girls experiencing domestic violence.
- Media, families and popular culture reject violence against women.
- Local, criminal justice and judicial systems are more responsive, e.g. they insure cultural and language interpretation services are available.
- Prostitution is recognized as an act of violence against women.

## 3. Guarantee women's Health and Reproductive Rights

Women should have access to local, legal, and affordable health care, access to comprehensive sex education, and healthcare systems responsive to their needs.

### **Examples of Indicators or Strategies:**

- Health policy and practice adequately meet women's health needs, protect women's reproductive rights, and provide comprehensive sexuality education.
- Gender, race and equity lens is applied in health research and delivery.
- Women's health, wellness and prevention are promoted within health systems and communities.

## 4. Expand women's Political Power.

Women will enjoy equal influence at all levels of government, business, and nonprofits bringing new perspectives and expertise that advance equality and justice.

### **Examples of Indicators or Strategies:**

- Increased number of women voters.
- Increased representation of women – particularly women from marginalized communities – in local, state and national office; more women elected to office.
- Increased women's leadership in public, private and nonprofit sectors, such as increased participation of women on non-profit boards.

## **Size of Planning Grants**

Grants are available up to \$5,000.

## **Duration of Planning Grants**

The planning period will be for five months, from April 1, 2012 to August 31, 2012.

## **Geographic Ranges of Planning Grants**

Applications are encouraged from all areas of the state of Minnesota.

*Organizations from underserved and under-resourced communities are strongly encouraged to apply.*



## Funding Criteria



The Women’s Foundation funds proposals that have a primary focus of building equality for women and girls. If this is your organization’s or program’s primary focus, then you’re already off to a great start!

The Women’s Foundation makes funding decisions by evaluating proposals based on:

1. Programmatic and organizational alignment with the Women’s Foundation’s values; and
2. The overall strength of the proposal based on:
  - a. Organizational capacity;
  - b. The effectiveness of the proposed project; and
  - c. The potential to build long-term social change for women and girls in a specific cornerstone area, focused on a specific outcome.

### Values

The Women’s Foundation’s five core values — social change, inclusion, feminism, justice, and hope – have been translated into funding practices. Organizations that strongly reflect these values are eligible for Social Change funding.

#### Criteria include:

- A demonstrated commitment to women’s equality, using a gender, race, place, sexual orientation, age lens.
- An organization or project governed and directed by women (women led);
- The participation of women and girls to define their needs and shape the programs to address those needs;
- Board members, staff, and volunteers representative of the population being served and who are in decision making roles in the organization;
- Inclusive organizations that value the perspectives and contributions of all people and that strive to incorporate the needs and viewpoints of diverse communities into the design and implementation of its programs; and
- Working with underserved and underrepresented women and girls.

### Proposal Strength

The strength of a proposal is evaluated in three categories. The strongest proposals are those that meet all or most of the following criteria:

#### 1. Organizational Capacity

- The organization’s financial condition is stable.
- The project has adequate resources, including funding, staff, and support from organization leadership.

2. Effectiveness of Proposed Project

- The planning process is focused and well defined.
- The planning project is strategic to the organization’s mission and appropriate in its timing.
- Appropriate stakeholders are involved in the process.
- The project budget is adequate, relates to the project narrative, and costs are reasonable.

3. Potential Social Change Impact

- The project has potential to effectively create social change in one of four Cornerstone Areas of Social Change to achieve one (or more) of the identified outcomes for that cornerstone.
- Planning will further public policy gains to increase equity for women and girls.
- Planning would potentially create a “model program” to grow equality for women and girls.

**Women's Foundation of Minnesota WILL fund:**

- Organizations incorporated as not-for-profits.
- American Indian Nations
- Unincorporated organizations with a fiscal agent.

**Women's Foundation of Minnesota will NOT fund:**

- Scholarships to a university, college, or technical program.
- Projects within religious institutions that do not align with the mission and values of the Women’s Foundation of Minnesota.
- Retroactive funding.
- Fundraising events.
- Direct services.
- Individuals
- Organizations that may be deemed as discriminatory on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, physical or mental ability, veteran status, military obligation, and marital status.
- Organizations that limit or oppose a woman’s right to self determination.
- Reduction of an operating deficit or to liquidate existing debt.
- Agencies of state or federal government, unless they are part of a community collaborative that includes eligible organizations.
- Organizations outside of Minnesota.



## Crafting Your Proposal



As a part of the online application process, you will be asked to provide the following information. The answers you provide to the questions in each category represent your full grant proposal. Answers for each question must not exceed 250 words.

For applicants who need it, a “*Save and Finish Later*”-option is available at the end of each online application page.

### 1. Organizational Information

- Provide a brief description of your organization, including your organization’s mission, history, and accomplishments. Include a description of your organization’s commitment to women’s equality and the ways your organization is women-led.

### 2. Description of Planning Activities

- Provide a description of your proposed planning project, including the outcome you plan to address.
- Why has your organization decided to undertake this planning project at this time?
- Provide a timeline for the five-month planning period.
- Who will lead and participate in the planning process?
- Describe the ways women and/or girls will be involved in the planning process.
- What strategies and activities will your planning grant include?
- How will your planning grant increase your ability to create social change in this Outcome?

### 3. Women's Foundation Diversity Survey

The Women’s Foundation does not view diversity as a quota system. Diversity is embedded in the work we do to advance social change, and it is a core value and practice of the Foundation.

- The diversity survey is meant to illustrate the levels of diversity and representation in decision making roles of the population that is being served by the organization and commitment to plurality at all levels of the organization.
- Use your best estimate in completing the survey to represent the make up of your organization.

#### 4. Additional Required Documents

On the final page of the online application, *before clicking the “Review & Submit button,”* you must attach the following documents:

- Project budget and narrative. PLEASE USE FORM SUPPLIED BY THE FOUNDATION.
- Organization budget.
- Copy of most recent audited financial statement or IRS Form 990.
- Copy of your 501(c) 3 determination letter or determination letter of your fiscal sponsor.
- List of current board members.
- Diversity Survey. PLEASE USE FORM SUBMITTED BY THE FOUNDATION.

#### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A grants information webinar will be offered on Thursday, December 15, 2011, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Participation and registration information can be accessed at [wfmn.org](http://wfmn.org).



## Proposal Submission

**Application Deadline: January 19, 2012.**

All applications **MUST BE COMPLETED ONLINE** at the Women’s Foundation’s website at [www.wfmn.org](http://www.wfmn.org) by 5:00 p.m. on January 19, 2012.

*Applications mailed to the Women’s Foundation of Minnesota will **NOT** be accepted.*

## Contact Information

Throughout the application process, Women’s Foundation staff is on-hand to help you! Please contact us with questions, clarification or assistance, anytime:

- Kim Borton, director of programs, (direct) 612-236-1819, (toll-free) 888-337-5010, or [kim@wfmn.org](mailto:kim@wfmn.org).
- Sheila Carrington, program officer, (direct) 612-236-1817, (toll-free) 888-337-5010, or [sheila@wfmn.org](mailto:sheila@wfmn.org).