



Women's
Foundation
of MINNESOTA

JULY 2009

GROWING EQUALITY FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Social Change Fund Multi-Year Grant

Guidelines and Online Application Instructions

OVERVIEW — THE WOMEN'S FOUNDATION OF MINNESOTA invests in social change to achieve equality for all women and girls in Minnesota. The Foundation's Social Change Fund awards grants to nonprofits that are working to change attitudes and behaviors, or to shift institutions and policies to increase equality for women and girls.

Social Change Fund grants are multi-year grants. Grants will be awarded for up to three years of funding, renewable each year based on evidence of satisfactory progress toward goals and outcomes.



What to expect



Size of Multi-Year Grants

Grants range from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year. If you are applying for a grant as part of a collaboration, grants range from \$20,000 - \$50,000. Please note that the size of your grant will slightly decrease in the third year of funding.

Duration of Grant Cycle

Year 1: February 1, 2010 to January 31, 2011

Year 2: February 1, 2011 to January 31, 2012

Year 3: February 1, 2012 to January 31, 2013

Commitment to Gender and Equality

A focused gender analysis is essential. For instance, what is the situation or condition you want to change for women and girls?

Social Change vs. Direct Service

Many programs work with women and girls to change the circumstances of their individual lives through direct service. Programs that focus on changes in individual behavior of women or girls unrelated to social action or change in the broader community are not eligible for funding through the Social Change Fund. Shifts in individual behavior must lead to increased community capacity to organize for change in order to be eligible for funding through the Social Change Fund.

This request for proposals (RFP) is designed to help you easily prepare a grant proposal. If you have any questions along the way, please contact either:

- Charlotte Flowers, Program Officer, at (direct) 612-236-1807, (toll-free) 888-337-5010, or charlotte@wfmn.org.
- Sida Ly-Xiong, Associate Director of Evaluation and Research, at (direct) 612-236-1803, (toll-free) 888-337-5010, or sida@wfmn.org.



STEP ONE: Types of Funding

Foundation grants may support the following types of activities and programs. (SELECT ONE)

1. General Operating

General Operating grants are for organizations for which social change for women and girls is central to their mission. Grants are for operational costs that maintain and sustain the ongoing work of an organization (salaries, benefits, rent, copying, phone, etc.).

2. Project

For projects that demonstrate significant promise for success and sustainability to move equality forward for women and girls.

3. Collaboration

For two or more organizations working on a joint project to advance equality for women and girls. One organization should apply as the primary partner and attach letters of agreement from the other partner organization.

4. Public Policy Grants in Economic Justice: *A new initiative*

Public Policy grants will be awarded to organizations working to affect laws and regulations that ensure an adequate safety net for all women, with an emphasis on low-income, underserved and underrepresented women.

What is included in “safety net?” Access to child care, education, job opportunities and training, housing, unemployment and public assistance, and child support enforcement.

Sample activities: Lobbying, coalition-building for legislative action, budget monitoring, efforts to pass legislation, or efforts to improve rules and regulations governing allocation of funding.

Sample project: Working as a coalition to pass a bill that will increase access to child care subsidies for low-income women.

Please note: applications are also accepted for policy work in other cornerstones as project or collaboration grants.



STEP TWO: Choose ONE Area of Funding

Review the following Five Cornerstone Areas of Social Change and select **ONE** cornerstone area and **ONE** outcome (bulleted under the following five cornerstones) that align with your work.

(1) Creating Economic Justice for Women:

Women will thrive economically. Communities will benefit when women – as a result of education, employment opportunities and economic development – make poverty history.

- Decreased pay gap between men and women, between white women and women of color.
- Adequate social safety net that assures economic self sufficiency including access to child care, education, job opportunities and training, housing, unemployment and public assistance, and child support enforcement.
(NOTE: This outcome is the only one eligible for our new Public Policy initiative.)
- Full and equal access to educational opportunities for women and girls.
- Full and equal access to employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.





(2) Advancing Women's Safety and Security:

Women will experience the world as a safe place.

- 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.
- Media and advertising promote strong, positive images of women and girls.
- Local, criminal justice and judicial systems are more responsive, e.g. they insure cultural and language interpretation services are available.
- Solutions to decrease violence against women and girls are found within communities, families and cultural groups.
- Trafficking of women and girls is illegal and prostitution is recognized as an act of violence against women.

(3) Guaranteeing Women's Health and Reproductive Rights:

All women in Minnesota will have local, legal, and affordable health care.

- Universal, comprehensive health care reform and coverage.
- Health policy and practice adequately meet women and girls' health needs, protect women and girls' reproductive rights, and provide comprehensive sexuality education.
- Decreased rates of teen pregnancy among teens overall, especially girls of color.
- 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) Promoting Women's Human Rights:

Women's human rights and dignity are unquestioned, and women are free from discrimination and able to act upon their dreams.

- Increased access and opportunity to legal services and other fundamental human rights and services.
- Decreased discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, legal status, ability and other systems that oppress women.

(5) Expanding 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.

- Increased number of women voters;
- Increased representation of women in local, state and national office; more women elected to office
- Increased percentage of composition and leadership of women on legislative committees
- Increased women's leadership in public, private and nonprofit sectors, such as Increased participation of women on non profit boards.

STEP THREE: Indicators of Social Change

After deciding the type of funding and selecting one cornerstone area and outcome, select **ONE** Indicator of Social Change to evaluate (measure) your project's success.

Why these indicators? Our Social Change Fund evaluation framework uses the Indicators of Social Change to identify the kind of social change that applicants intend to achieve. Within this framework, social change is successfully achieved when the following shifts that increase equality for women and girls occur:

- (1) Shifts in individual or community behavior:** Change in individual behavior that leads to increased community capacity to organize for social change.
- (2) Shifts in definition or reframing of issues:** The issue is defined differently in the community or larger society.
- (3) Shifts in critical mass or engagement:** People in the community or larger society are more engaged.
- (4) Shifts in institutions or policies:** An institutional policy or practice has changed. *(NOTE: If you are applying for Public Policy funding, you must choose this indicator.)*
- (5) Maintaining or holding the line:** Earlier progress has been maintained in the face of opposition.



Funding Criteria

In this section, the aim is to take the mystery out of how to craft a successful proposal. 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. How well an organization's work is aligned with the Women's Foundation's values.
2. The overall strength of the proposal based on:
 - a. Organizational capacity.
 - b. The effectiveness of the proposed project to advance gender equality.

Values

The Women's Foundation's five Core Values – social change, inclusion, feminism, justice, and hope – have been translated into funding practices. Funded organizations embody the following values:

- An organization has a demonstrated commitment to women's equality;
- An organization or project is governed and directed by women and girls where women and girls identify solutions to the issues facing their communities; and





- Board members, staff, volunteers and key partners are representative of the constituents being served and constituents have decision-making roles in the organization.
- Programs representing the diversity of race, ethnicity, culture, place, age, class, religion, ability, and sexual orientation will receive funding preference.

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's leadership.
- A Social Change Fund grant can be used to leverage funding from other sources to sustain the organization and/or project.

2. Effectiveness of Proposed Project to Advance Gender Equality

- Gender Lens: Effective application of a gender lens to identify the situation or condition that needs to change for women and girls.
- Outcomes: Effective work in one of the five Cornerstone Areas to achieve one of the selected outcomes for that cornerstone.
- Process: Strategic use of one of the five Indicators of Social Change to accomplish social change outcomes.
- Implementation: Clear plan that includes strategies and activities related to achieving social change outcomes.
- Evaluation: Evaluation plan that will effectively measure social change outcomes.
- Impact: The potential impact of the proposed project to move equality for women and girls forward.

Women's Foundation of Minnesota WILL fund:

- Organizations incorporated as not-for-profits.
- American Indian Nations
- Unincorporated organizations.
Note: If your organization is unincorporated, please contact Foundation staff **BEFORE** submitting an application, to discuss your organization, project, and your fiscal arrangements:
 - Charlotte Flowers, Program Officer, at (direct) 612-236-1807, (toll-free) 888-337-5010, or charlotte@wfmn.org.
 - Sida Ly-Xiong, Associate Director of Evaluation and Research, at (direct) 612-236-1803, (toll-free) 888-337-5010, or sida@wfmn.org.)

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.
- Deficit budgets: 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.
- Programs that are not focused on serving women and girls in Minnesota.



Funding Process and Schedule

Our funding process engages community volunteers, staff and board as members of the Social Change Fund Committee (SCFC). The SCFC engages in an exhaustive grant review process over several months to make key funding recommendations to the Foundation's Board of Trustees regarding groups they feel best represent the mission, goals and values of the Women's Foundation.

2009 SCF grant funding process and schedule:

OCTOBER 2009

- The deadline for grant applications is October 1.
- Social Change Fund Committee (SCFC) review proposals in the five Cornerstone areas.

NOVEMBER 2009

- The SCFC meets to decide which proposals should be advanced for site visits.
- Statewide site visits begin.

DECEMBER 2009

- Statewide site visits continue.
- The SCFC meets to decide which of the groups that were site visited should be recommended for funding approval by the Board of Trustees.

JANUARY 2010

- The Board of Trustees approves funding recommendations.

FEBRUARY 2010

- Checks are issued to approved groups.

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. Organization Information

- Provide a brief history of your organization, including your organization's mission, history, and accomplishments. If this is a collaborative project, include information about each partner.

Organizational Values

- Describe your organization's commitment to women's equality. Please give examples of this commitment.
- To what extent is your organization women-led? How are women and/or girls involved in the leadership and governance of your organization?
- Please describe the extent to which the diverse constituency that you serve is reflected at all levels within your organization, including board and staff.

Organizational Capacity

- Explain how the proposed project aligns with the strategic direction of your organization.
- Who will implement the proposed project? Will you add staff, or will the project fall within the duties of existing staff?
- Describe the possibilities for sustaining the project after the multi-year Social Change Fund grant is complete.
- For collaborations: How will working together increase your ability to achieve your intended outcomes?

2. Project Description

- Provide a 3-5 sentence summary of your proposed project.
- What type of funding are you seeking? (SELECT ONE)
- Quantify the number of people involved in your program by gender, race, ethnicity, culture, place, age, class, religion, ability, and sexual orientation, where applicable.
- Describe the ways your constituents will be involved in the development of this project.

3. Advancing Gender Equality Framework

(Note: A worksheet or logic model is available to assist you in completing this portion of your application that you can print out and review before answering the following questions.)

Gender Lens

- What is the situation/condition you want to change for women and girls?
- What are some of the root causes of that situation/condition?

Outcomes

- What Cornerstone area does your project address? (SELECT ONE)
- Why have you chosen this Cornerstone area?
- Which Cornerstone outcomes have you selected that your program will advance? (SELECT ONE)
- In the context of this outcome, what is the change you want to produce?

Process

- Which of the five Indicators of Social Change applies to your work? (SELECT ONE)
- Strategically, why have you chosen this indicator?

Implementation

- Which strategic goal of your organization aligns with this work?
- Describe the strategies you will use during the three-year grant period to reach your outcome.
- Describe the activities related to these strategies that you will use in the first year of your grant, including a timeline.

Evaluation

- How will you know you are making progress toward your outcome?
- What will be your evidence? What do you see?

Impact

- What long-term difference will be made as a result of your project? How will the world be different and better?

4. Additional Required Documents

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

- Women's Foundation Diversity Survey (USE FORM SUPPLIED BY THE FOUNDATION)
- Project budget and narrative. (USE FORM SUPPLIED BY THE FOUNDATION)
- A copy of your organization's current strategic plan.
- 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.
- For collaborations: Letters of agreement from collaborative partner organizations.

If your group does **NOT** have one or more of these documents, or if you have questions or concerns, please contact either:

- Charlotte Flowers, program officer, at (direct) 612-236-1807, (toll-free) 888-337-5010, or charlotte@wfmn.org.
- Sida Ly-Xiong, associate director of evaluation and research, at (direct) 612-236-1803, (toll-free) 888-337-5010, or sida@wfmn.org.

Proposal Submission

Application Deadline: October 1, 2009

All applications **MUST BE COMPLETED ONLINE** at the Women's Foundation's website at www.wfmn.org by 5:00 p.m. on October 1, 2009.

*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:

- Charlotte Flowers, program officer, at (direct) 612-236-1807, (toll-free) 888-337-5010, or charlotte@wfmn.org.
- Sida Ly-Xiong, associate director of evaluation and research, at (direct) 612-236-1803, (toll-free) 888-337-5010, or sida@wfmn.org.