
THE COMMON GROUND FUND ***Investing in Racial Justice and Social Change***

2004 Funding Guidelines and Request for Proposals

The Common Ground Fund (“Common Ground”) is seeking applications from non-profit community-based organizations in the Greater Washington region for projects that:

1. Address social justice issues impacting communities of color; and
2. Focus their work within racially diverse communities.

Successful applicants will receive a one-year grant of up to \$35,000. For 2004, Common Ground has a total of \$250,000 available to support grants. **Applications are due on August 20, 2004 by 5:00 p.m.**

THE COMMON GROUND FUND

The Common Ground Fund, formerly the Initiative to Strengthen Neighborhood Inter-Group Assets, became a program of The Community Foundation’s Bridging Differences Initiative in January 2000. It was launched in 1996 in response to the rising tensions within racially and ethnically diverse neighborhoods in the Greater Washington region. Since 1997, Common Ground has awarded more than \$1.3 million in grants that support organizations and individuals working to eliminate barriers to improving life for communities of color and change the circumstances and institutions that facilitate oppression. The mission of Common Ground is to address social justice issues impacting communities of color with a focus on investing in racially diverse neighborhoods.

Common Ground seeks to strengthen community efforts to achieve social change by:

- Investing in the leadership of communities of color;
- Providing resources and information to strengthen the ability of neighborhood leaders to form alliances that cross lines of race/ethnicity, country of origin, and socio-economic status;
- Supporting the ability of neighborhood alliances to tackle critical social justice issues; and
- Building a community of individuals and institutions committed to supporting the ability of neighborhood leaders to address social justice issues impacting communities of color in the region.

Common Ground is led by a steering committee composed of individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and who represent local foundations and community-based organizations. Common Ground is supported by resources from The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, the Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, the Fannie Mae Foundation, the Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, the Prince Charitable Trusts, the Weissberg Foundation, and The World Bank.

APPLICATION PROCESS

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- **Applicants must be designated non-profit 501(c)3 organizations.**
- **The proposed project must be conducted in a geographic community located within the Greater Washington region** (Washington DC, Montgomery County, Prince Georges County, Arlington County, the City of Alexandria, Fairfax County, Fairfax City, the City of Falls Church, and Loudoun County).
- **Applicants must form partnerships that include organizations or leadership structures serving the selected neighborhood.** Applications must be submitted by the agency assuming primary responsibility for the leadership, management and support of the project. Applications submitted by an organization serving solely as a fiscal agent will not be accepted.
- **Projects must focus on a clearly defined social justice issue.** Applicants must clearly identify the social justice issue that is the focus of the project.

PRIORITIES FOR FUNDING

Priority for funding will be given to proposals that:

- **Operate within racially diverse communities.** In the past, Common Ground has funded projects that organized diverse racial groups of residents to fight for affordable housing, and joined together neighborhood residents of diverse races and ethnicities to advocate for affordable, culturally-competent health care services. While we remain interested in all social justice issues targeting racially diverse communities, Common Ground is particularly interested in projects working to reduce the achievement gap in our region's public school systems.
- **Engage and encourage diverse community leadership.** The leadership of communities impacted by the identified social justice issue must play an active role in decision-making for the proposed project. Applicants and community leaders should collectively determine a strategy for taking action to create social change. Inclusion of leaders that reflect the racial and social diversity of the impacted community is vital.
- **Emphasize Relationship Building.** It is essential for groups working in diverse communities to develop individual and organizational relationships that are honest, respectful and collaborative. Common Ground urges applicants to develop an effective strategy for strengthening vital relationships with partnering organizations and community leaders.
- **Increase understanding of racial and social injustices and the unique skills necessary to address them.** Participating organizations should participate in learning opportunities that provide project leaders the opportunity to increase their understanding of social and racial oppression and strengthen the skills that will allow them to address the identified issue on a community level. (Common Ground will offer technical assistance activities to all 2005 grantees.)

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

All applicants should follow the attached proposal format. **The proposal deadline is August 20, 2004, by 5:00 p.m.** Please mail or deliver your proposal, attachments, and budget information so that it is received by the due date to:

The Common Ground Fund
The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region
1201 15th Street NW, Suite 420, Washington, DC 20005

AWARD DECISIONS

The maximum amount of funds that will be awarded per grantee is \$35,000. \$250,000 is available to support projects this year. Last year, Common Ground awarded 9 grants ranging in amounts from \$20,000 to \$25,000. Common Ground's steering committee will make final award decisions by December 2004. Grants are made for one year only. Current and past grantees are eligible to apply for funds.

FURTHER INFORMATION

We encourage applicants to contact staff if they have any questions or concerns regarding the request for proposals. Please contact John Kern, Program Associate, at jkern@cfncr.org, or Tom Kam, Senior Program Officer, at tkam@cfncr.org. You can reach John or Tom by phone at 202-955-5890.

If you need an additional copy of this document, please consult The Community Foundation's website at www.cfncr.org to access a copy of the request for proposals.

COMMUNITY BRIEFING

Interested applicants are invited to attend the following community briefing to obtain in-depth information and guidance on responses to the 2004 request for proposals.

Thursday July 29, 2004

4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region
1201 15th Street NW, Suite 420
Washington, DC 20005

Limited metered parking (2-hour maximum) is available in surrounding neighborhoods. Garage parking (\$10-\$14) is also available. Use of Metrorail is recommended. (McPherson Square on the Blue/Orange lines and Farragut North on the Red line are both within walking distance.)

Please RSVP by contacting Ben Murphy at (202) 955-5890 or cfintern@cfncr.org by July 22, 2004.

THE COMMON GROUND FUND
Investing in Racial Justice and Social Change

2004 Request for Proposals

Your proposal should include all information requested in Sections I, II, III and IV. Please utilize the section headings presented in bold type to organize requested information. The narrative portion of the application should not exceed 10 pages and should be double-spaced. Please use a standard typeface no smaller than 12 points and no less than .25 margins.

Send five complete copies, including the original: cover sheet, 10 page narrative, attachments and budget information.

For the purpose of this proposal, the following terms are understood to mean:

- “Lead Agency”** Agency that is submitting the application on behalf of a partnership, and is assuming primary responsibility for the leadership, management and support of the project.
- “Communities of Color”** Racial groups not identified as “White,” “Caucasian,” or “European American.” (e.g., African American, Latino, African, Asian Pacific Islanders, etc.)

I. COVER SHEET (Please use this format to create a one-page cover sheet.)

- Date
- Name and address of lead agency
- Director of lead agency
- Project contact name and title, and email/phone/fax
- Tax exempt status
- Total organizational budget (current year)
- Organization’s mission (summarize in 2-3 sentences)
- Starting date of fiscal year
- Grant request amount
- Total project budget
- Brief project description (summarize in 2-3 sentences)
- If applicable, total grants received from Common Ground (formerly known as the Initiative to Strengthen Neighborhood Inter-Group Assets) for the past three years: list purpose, amount, and year for all grants (e.g., youth program-\$5,000-1998; general operating- \$20,000-2001)
- Identify project partners (contact, organization name, address, and phone/fax/email)
- Signature of the lead agency’s Executive Director, Board Chair or President

II. NARRATIVE (maximum of ten pages.)

A. Introduction and Background of Lead Agency (Incorporating the following points:)

1. Briefly describe your organization's history and major accomplishments.
2. Describe your current programs and activities.
3. Who is your constituency (be specific about demographics such as race/ethnicity, country of origin, socio-economic status, gender, and age)? How are they actively involved in your work and how do they/will they benefit from this project?
4. Has your organization formally discussed issues of race, power, privilege among its staff and/or board? What were the outcomes of that discussion?
5. Identify the project partners and provide a history of your working relationship with each partner.

B. Describe Your Request (Incorporating the following points:)

1. What social justice issue will your project seek to address and why? Describe how your efforts will seek to change the circumstances that create or promote the oppression of individuals or communities.
2. How did you identify this issue? What specific groups in your community or neighborhood are most affected by this issue? Please provide any relevant data that reflects this issue and how it impacts your selected community.
3. How were members of your community involved in the decision to address this social justice issue?
4. Identify the geographic community in the Greater Washington region that the project will target.
5. How will the leadership of communities impacted by the identified social justice issue be incorporated into your project? How does this incorporation provide opportunities for community leaders to further develop their leadership skills?
6. What are the short- and long-term goals for your project? What project objectives and activities will your organization, its partners and community members implement to achieve the short-term goals? Describe your specific activities/strategies using a timeline over the course of this request.
7. Describe the strategies that will be employed to develop relationships among individuals and/or organizations.
8. The following is a list of skills associated with addressing social justice issues in communities of color. Please briefly describe, where appropriate, your organization's and/or your key partners' capacity within these areas. If there is a skill or capacity your organization has that will support the project but is not listed here please describe.
 - a. Community organizing
 - b. Facilitating community forums
 - c. Facilitating small group discussions
 - d. Working with local governments (e.g., Mayor's Office, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANC))
 - e. Working in communities of color
 - f. Developing multicultural leadership
 - g. Discussing issues of racism, power, privilege, diversity and/or multiculturalism
9. Identify the skills your organization, partners and community does not have, but may need to achieve your goals.
10. If the project was previously funded by Common Ground, briefly describe successes and failures.

III. ATTACHMENTS/REQUIREMENTS

A. Evaluation

1. Briefly describe the outcomes you hope to achieve from this project. What will success look like?
2. Briefly describe the indicators you will utilize to measure the achievement of your outcomes.
3. Who will be involved in evaluating this work— lead and/or partnering organizations (i.e., staff, board), constituents, community, and/or consultants?
4. How will the evaluation results be used?

B. Lead Agency Structure/Administration

1. Briefly describe how your organization works: What are the responsibilities of board, staff and volunteers?
2. Provide a list of your staff and board of directors with related racial/ethnic demographic information.
3. Who will be involved in carrying out the plans outlined in this request? Include a brief paragraph summarizing the qualifications of key individuals involved.
4. Describe how the collaboration among project partners will be structured?

C. Finances

1. Most recent, completed full year organizational financial statement (expenses, revenue and balance sheet), audited, if available.
2. Organization's current annual operating budget (see attached budget format).
4. Projected operating budget for upcoming year (see attached budget format).
5. Current project budget (see attached budget format).
6. List individually other funding sources for this request. Include amounts and indicate whether these have been received or are committed or projected.
7. Describe your plans for future fundraising.
8. A copy of your IRS 501(c)(3) letter.

D. Other Supporting Material

1. Required: Letters of commitment from each project partner specifying the role each will assume in supporting the project.
2. Optional: Recent newsletter articles, newspaper clippings, or evaluations (up to three).

IV. BUDGET

Please submit separate organizational and project budget information. If you already prepare organizational and project budgets that approximate this format, please feel free to submit them in their original forms. You may reproduce this form on your computer and/or submit separate pages for income and expenses.

Budget for the period: _____ to _____

Item	<u>EXPENSES</u>		<u>INCOME</u>	
	Amount	FT/PT	Source	Amount
Salaries & wages (breakdown by individual position and indicate full or part-time)	\$ _____	_____	Government grants & contracts (specify)	\$ _____
	_____	_____	Foundations (specify)	\$ _____
	_____	_____	Corporations	\$ _____
	_____	_____	Religious Institutions	\$ _____
	_____	_____	United Way, Combined Federal Campaign & other federated campaigns	\$ _____
Fringe benefits & payroll Taxes	\$ _____			
Consultants & professional fees	\$ _____		Individual contributions	\$ _____
Travel	\$ _____		Fundraising events & products	\$ _____
Equipment	\$ _____		Membership income	\$ _____
Supplies	\$ _____		In-kind support	\$ _____
Training	\$ _____		Other (earned income, consulting fees, etc. Please specify)	\$ _____
Printing & copying	\$ _____			
Telephone & fax	\$ _____			
Postage & delivery	\$ _____			
Rent & utilities	\$ _____			
In-kind expense	\$ _____			
Other (specify) _____	\$ _____			
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ _____		TOTAL INCOME	\$ _____
			BALANCE	\$ _____

Checklist:

- Five complete copies, including the original: cover sheet, 10 page narrative, attachments and budget information
- Used a standard typeface no smaller than 12 points and no less than .25 margins
- Executive Director, Board Chair or President for lead agency signature on the cover sheet
- Mail or deliver the complete proposal package to The Common Ground Fund, The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region (1201 15th Street NW, Suite 420, Washington, DC 20005/202-955-5890) so that is received by **August 20 @ 5:00 p.m.**



**THE
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**
for the National Capital Region

**1201 15th Street, NW Suite 420
Washington DC 20005**

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The Common Ground Fund: *Investing in Racial Justice and Social Change*

**OPEN IMMEDIATELY: IMPORTANT GRANT INFORMATION INSIDE
DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS: AUGUST 20, 2004 BY 5:00PM!**