REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Issue Date:
March 11, 2009

Submission Deadline:
April 6, 2009

Contact Information:
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The Student Social Venture Fund at NYU Stern is pleased to announce a Request for Proposals for its fifth annual grant cycle. The Student Social Venture Fund seeks to achieve tangible social impact and to provide a beneficial experience for applicants, grantees and students, through engaging the NYU, philanthropic and broader community. In addition to providing financial support, the Fund is highly engaged with its grantees through strategic, technical, and managerial assistance to help maximize the Fund’s social return.

ABOUT THE FUND

The Student Social Venture Fund (the Fund) at the NYU Stern School of Business is a grantmaking entity managed by NYU graduate students from the Business, Law, Public Policy and Public Management schools. The first of its kind in the nation, the Fund was founded in 2005, and operates as a practicum course. As a high-engagement grantmaker, the Fund provides both financial grants and ongoing organizational assistance to nonprofits in New York City. Each year, the current cohort of students selects the Fund’s annual grantmaking focus and continues to engage with grantees selected in prior years. While the focus may change slightly year to year, the Fund maintains a consistent mission as well as a particular interest in supporting projects and initiatives that demonstrate creativity and innovation in their programming approaches.

2009 GRANT OBJECTIVES

In 2009 the Fund will support non-profit and/or for-profit organizations that educate young adults or adults in underserved communities, through programs that facilitate the learning of new skills towards self-sufficiency and civic participation. Specifically, the fund aims to support organizations or programs that recognize and foster the interdependence and mutually reinforcing aspects of personal skill development and being part of something larger than oneself – civic society. The most attractive activities are those that specifically develop skills and capacities to enter or progress within the workforce as well as skills to act to effect change outside of the personal realm.

Therefore, the fund will seek proof of the following in prospective grantees’ programs:

- Active learning
- Broadening access to educational opportunity
- Practical knowledge and skill-building
- An emphasis on individual empowerment toward civic engagement
- A commitment to performance measurement and continuous programmatic improvement

Importance of Education

The Fund believes that education is a basic human right and is central to one’s ability to achieve personal and economic fulfillment. Members of marginalized communities will face challenges throughout their lifetimes – especially during difficult economic times like those we are presently facing. These community members need to have the personal skills, perspective, and orientation to independently navigate challenges as they arise. Moreover, they need a lasting skill set that will prepare them for challenges that they will continue to face in their lives for years to come.
Impact
We hope that through our funding and additional resources, we can help organizations to make an even greater impact on marginalized communities in New York City. We are looking to help nonprofit organizations and social enterprises to become sustainable and/or to increase their capacity-building measures. These organizations should have the vision to operate and grow for years down the road and be committed to sharing their best practices outward and making a lasting positive impact on their communities. These organizations should also serve as successful models to organizations with similar goals.

Eligible Organizations:
The fund is open to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and for-profit social enterprises that fulfill the grant objectives.

Required Criteria
- Programs must cater to highly marginalized New York City communities.
- Programs must be focused on serving individuals who are 14 years of age or older.
- Organizations must be committed to empowering individuals toward economic independence through providing educational/employment opportunities and/or advocating for related policies.

Additional Considerations
Organizations at all stages of development are encouraged to apply. We especially invite proposals from the following:
- Existing programs looking to increase the sustainability of their operations.
- Proposals that demonstrate creativity and innovation, with fresh and unique approaches in their program design.
- New programs with a strong plan for financial sustainability.
- Organizations that demonstrate how their programs will serve those most impacted by recent macroeconomic events.

Organizations may make program-specific requests and/or requests for general operating support or capacity building. General operating support is unrestricted and can be used to cover overhead expenses, such as technology, staffing, and marketing that are not program-specific but that help the organization to be effective. Organizations pursuing research and teaching on best practices may also apply as well as organizations advocating for public policy affecting the individuals being served.

Examples of eligible programs (for illustration only) that integrate education/skill development and civic engagement: Program that helps youth develop academic skills by engaging them in experiential advocacy or organizing campaigns; community development institution offering financial literacy programs for adults and products for unbanked to lower reliance on high-fee check cashing businesses; organization working to connect immigrants to skilled jobs based on their professions in their home countries while also educating employers about this overlooked talent pool; literacy program for parents that also helps them become more engaged in their children’s educations; programs to re-integrate ex-offenders that connect them to community service opportunities.
WHAT THE FUND WILL NOT SUPPORT

- Direct grants to individuals, scholarships, fellowships, etc.
- Projects with a religious purpose or partisan political activities
- Organizations not interested in a high-engagement grantmaking relationship [make sure this goes with rest of bullets so doesn’t create blank page]

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

The application format is the NY/NJ Common Application Form, however some additional information and documents as they relate to the goals of this RFP are also requested. Below is a checklist of required additional information. Submit the attached Common Application plus the following additional items. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Additional Information – Maximum of 3 pages to include all of the following:

- Please speak to how your organization encompasses the required criteria
- Please address your organization’s plan for financial sustainability (i.e. long-term foundation support, incorporating revenue generating business models, etc).
- A description of how this grant will help build and/or add stability your organization. Please include information about the type of additional support (besides SSVF funding) the organization needs to move to this next level (e.g. talent, space, expertise, marketing).
- An organizational chart of your organization, parent/subsidiary organizations, and your program(s).
- The Student Social Venture Fund at NYU Stern is a high engagement grantmaker. Please describe how you would use the support of NYU graduate students in completing a project in the spring of 2010. Additionally, if you are currently working with another high engagement funder, please outline your relationship with the organization.
- Please tell us how you learned about the Fund and whether or not you are a first-time applicant.

FUNDING TERMS

During the Spring 2009 grant cycle, the Fund anticipates awarding 1-2 grants. Up to $25,000 will be distributed in total.

Funding will be distributed as early as possible, with an anticipated dispersal by October 2009. Funding contracts will be limited to one year.

REVIEW PROCESS AND SELECTION GUIDELINES

As part of the review process, the Fund will:
- Review and evaluate all proposals and,
- Make site visits and interview finalists. Site visits and interviews for finalists only will take place between April 22 and April 29, 2009.
The Student Social Venture Fund at NYU Stern
...a catalyst for change

The Fund will consider the following criteria, among others, when evaluating applications:

- Strong, dedicated organizational leadership
- Evidence of strong financial management
- Fit of the proposal with the goals of the Fund and the specific objectives of the 2009 Grant Cycle, particularly the degree to which this funding is likely to have a meaningful impact
- Innovative practices of the organization and its programming that set it apart from others
- Realistic and actionable goals and indications of strategic planning
- Quality and thoughtfulness of program evaluation metrics
- A system for measuring program’s impact
- Proven past success in making an impact (if applicable)

Submission Instructions

The deadline for applications is **5:00 pm, April 6, 2009**

All applications, including attachments, must be submitted electronically via email to: ssvfnyu@gmail.com

Hard copies of applications will not be accepted.

* Please put “[Your organization’s name] 2009 SSVF application” in the email subject
* Please put the name of your organization, contact name, email address, and phone number in the body of the email.
* Please include your entire application in ONE master PDF document (including the Cover page). **You may also submit MS Word/Excel files in 2003 format (.doc) but PDF is preferred.**
* **Cover page:** Please include a cover page on your application that provides your organization name, contact person, and contact information. Also on the cover page, please reproduce the following language; the typed “Name” will serve as your electronic signature:

  The undersigned applicant(s) do hereby represent and warrant that the information contained on this form, and any attachments submitted in conjunction with this application, is complete and correct.

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Questions?

Prospective applicants may email the Fund with questions about the RFP at ssvfnyu@gmail.com. If you are having technical difficulties with your submission, please email us.

Contact Information:
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44 West Fourth Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10012
Email: ssvfnyu@gmail.com • URL: http://www.stern.nyu.edu/ssvf
New York/New Jersey Area
Common Application Form

The foundations and corporations that developed this common application form hope it will help nonprofit organizations in the New York/New Jersey area save time in the grant application process. Please note the following important points:

- Every funder has different guidelines and priorities.
- Every funder has different deadlines and timetables.
- Any funder that has agreed to accept this application may request additional information at any stage in their application process.
- Some funders choose to provide both general and project support grants, while others choose specifically only to award project grants.

Before submitting this application to a potential funder, you need to check to see whether your project or program matches their published interests and what forms of grant support that they will consider providing (e.g., general support, project support, capital grants, etc.). Information about individual grant programs is available from each funder, and at The Foundation Center’s New York library, 79 Fifth Avenue (between 15th and 16th Streets), 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10003, and its cooperating collections in the greater New York tri-state metropolitan area.

Instructions

- Please type and single-space all proposals.
- Please answer all of the questions in the order listed.
- Please use headings as provided.
- Please submit only one copy.
- Please do not include any materials other than those specifically requested at this time.
- Please do not send videotapes.
Application Form

New York/New Jersey Area
Common Application Form

Cover Sheet

Date of application: ____________________________________________

Name of organization to which grant would be paid. Please list exact legal name:
________________________________________________________________

Purpose of grant (one sentence): __________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Address of organization: __________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Telephone number: ___________ Fax: ___________ E-mail: ___________

Executive director: __________________________________________

Contact person and title (if not executive director): __________________________

Is your organization an IRS 501(c)(3) not-for-profit? (yes or no): __________

If no, please explain: __________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Grant request: $________________________

Check one (based on the organization’s priorities and the funder’s guidelines):

General support __________

Project support __________

Total organizational budget (for current year): $__________________________

Dates covered by this budget (mo/day/year): __________

Total project budget (if requesting project support): $________________________

Dates covered by project budget (mo/day/year): __________________________

Project name (if applicable): __________________________________________
New York/New Jersey Area Common Application Form
Grant Proposal Format

I. PROPOSAL SUMMARY: one-half page, maximum

Please summarize in a short paragraph the purpose of your agency. Briefly explain why your agency is requesting this grant, what outcomes you hope to achieve, and how you will spend the funds if a grant is made.

II. NARRATIVE—Five pages maximum.

A. Background—Describe the work of your agency, addressing each of the following:

1. A brief description of its history and mission.

2. The need or problem that your organization works to address, and the population that your agency serves, including geographic location, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability and language.

3. Current programs and accomplishments. Please emphasize the achievements of the recent past.

4. Number of paid full-time staff; number of paid part-time staff; number of volunteers.

5. Your organization’s relationships — both formal and informal — with other organizations working to meet the same needs or providing similar services. Please explain how you differ from these other agencies.

B. Funding Request—Please describe the program for which you seek funding.

1. If applying for general operating support, briefly describe how this grant would be used.

2. If your request is for a specific project, please explain the project including:

   • A statement of its primary purpose and the need or problem that you are seeking to address.

   • The population that you plan to serve and how this population will benefit from the project.

   • Strategies that you will employ to implement your project.
Application Form

- The proposed staffing pattern for the project, and the names and titles of the individuals who will direct the project.

- Anticipated length of the project.

- How the project contributes to your organization’s overall mission.

C. Evaluation—Please explain how you will measure the effectiveness of your activities. Describe your criteria for a successful program and the results you expect to have achieved by the end of the funding period.
III. ATTACHMENTS—Please label all attachments to correspond to the bold-faced, capitalized items below.

A. Financial Information—Please provide the dates that each document covers.

1. Your MOST RECENT FINANCIAL STATEMENT, audited if available. This statement should reflect actual expenditures and funds received during your most recent fiscal year.

2. Aligned side by side on the same page, your OPERATING EXPENSE BUDGETS for the current and most recent fiscal year.

3. Aligned side by side on the same page, A LIST OF foundation and corporate SUPPORTERS and all other sources of income, with amounts, for your current and most recent fiscal year.

4. Please list the foundations, corporations, and other SOURCES that you are SOLICITING FOR FUNDING and, to the best of your knowledge, the STATUS OF YOUR PROPOSAL with each.

If project funding is requested:

5. A CURRENT EXPENSE BUDGET FOR THE PROJECT. List each staff line separately and include % of time spent on project. Indicate the specific uses of the requested grant, if possible.

6. A list of all SOURCES OF INCOME toward the project, actual and prospective with amounts.

B. Other Supporting Materials

1. A list of your Board of Directors, with their affiliations.

2. A copy of your most recent IRS letter indicating your agency’s tax exempt status, or, if not available, an explanation.

3. One-paragraph resumes of key staff, including qualifications relevant to the specific request.

4. Your most recent annual report, if available.

5. No more than three examples of recent articles about, or evaluations of, your organization, if available.