



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

LETTER OF INTENT INSTRUCTIONS

All organizations requesting funding from the California Community Foundation (CCF) are required to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI). The LOI provides CCF staff with an opportunity to learn about your organization, the community problems that you seek to address, how your organization intervenes to help solve these problems and the long-term outcomes/changes that you seek to achieve in your community. In addition, the LOI provides your organization with an opportunity to describe how its mission and work specifically align with CCF's program goals, strategies and outcomes.

Please read the Foundation's Grant Guidelines before attempting to complete the LOI form. A copy of the Grant Guidelines can be found under the "Receive" tab on CCF's website (www.calfund.org).

The information below is provided to help you complete the LOI form. Questions about how to complete the LOI form should be directed to CCF's grants specialist at (213) 413-4130.

I. ORGANIZATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide the requested contact information for your organization. Also include the name and title of the agency head and specify the contact person for the application, if different from the agency head. Include e-mail addresses and telephone and fax numbers for these individuals.

Helpful Hints:

CCF uses GuideStar's Charity Check to verify the 501(c)(3) status of organizations. Please confirm that your agency is listed in GuideStar (www.guidestar.org) and include the Employer Identification Number (EIN#) on the LOI.

II. REQUEST SUMMARY

A. Program Areas to Which You Are Applying: This section lists the five core program areas of the foundation. Please identify the program area(s) that best represents the work of your organization and aligns with CCF's five core program areas, goals and strategies.

Helpful Hints:

Please familiarize yourself with the foundation's core program areas and strategies in the Grant Guidelines before you check any of these boxes. Choosing more than one program area does not necessarily improve your organization's chances for support. The most competitive requests

are those that demonstrate a strong alignment with your organization's work and CCF's specific funding strategies. Examples of organizations that are more/less likely to be competitive are outlined under each program area page in the Grant Guidelines.

Questions regarding the fit of the request should be directed to the appropriate program officer(s) at the Foundation. A list of staff can be found on the CCF website (www.calfund.org) for each Program Area page under the "Receive" tab.

B. Types of Support

The foundation provides four types of grant support to nonprofit organizations. They are:

(1) Core Operating: Unrestricted funds to support the general operations of an organization whose work is consistent with the foundation's program areas and prioritized strategies and outcomes. More than 90% of CCF's competitive grants are awarded for core operating support.

The following three types of support are project-specific:

(2) Capacity Building: Funds that either enhance an agency's ability to meet its mission and goals or position an organization to increase its scale and ability to meet community needs. Support is provided for a range of activities including training and technical assistance in organizational assessment, strategic planning, board and staff development, fundraising plans, skills development and technology upgrades.

(3) Capital Projects: Funds for one-time capital campaigns that help an agency with program expansion through the purchase, renovation or new construction of facilities.

(4) Policy Analysis and Advocacy: Funds to nonprofit organizations that conduct nonpartisan studies, engage in public awareness campaigns and promote collaborations among nonprofit, public and civic groups around critical community issues. This type of support is appropriate if your organization does a range of work (i.e., provides direct services in addition to policy/advocacy efforts) and is seeking support for a specific policy/advocacy project related to one or more of CCF's five program areas.

Helpful Hints:

If your organization's primary work is full-time policy/advocacy under a specific program area, consider applying for core operating support. Examples of this include trade associations for the various program areas (e.g., community clinics, adult day centers, etc.) Contact the appropriate program officer(s) for additional guidance if necessary.

Please note that all funding is contingent on a strategic plan or business plan for the organization that describes the institutional/strategic goals, measurable objectives, a logical set of programs and related activities, desired outcomes and evaluation plans. See Section VI for more information.

C. Proposal Description

Briefly describe the purpose of the request, activities to be undertaken, target population, geographic focus and other relevant information regarding the request.

D. Amount and Term Requested

Grants from CCF typically range between \$75,000 to \$100,000 over two years, however grant awards could be less or more than this range depending on funding availability for the specific program areas, the scale of your organization's work for the proposed grant period, your organization's budget size, etc.

For the proposed grant term, please note that core operating grants are typically awarded for two years. Upon completion of its first grant award, grantees are eligible to apply for two additional consecutive grants before being required to "sit out" for one year to ensure that funding is available for other organizations. For the three project-specific types of grant funding (i.e., capacity building, capital and policy/advocacy), grant awards typically range between six to 18 months, depending on the project timeframe.

III. ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

This section provides you with the opportunity to explain (a) your organization's mission, (b) the community problems your organization seeks to address, (c) how your organization intervenes to help solve these problems, (d) your organization's experience and results achieved relevant to the interventions listed previously, and (e) the long-term change/improvement that it seeks to achieve through its work.

Please adhere to the character limits listed after each question.

Helpful Hints:

(B) In describing the community problems that your organization addresses, please be brief and specific. Describe these problems with specific data/evidence that supports the identification of these problems. For example, if your organization is addressing a shortage/gap, how does this shortage/gap compare to the countywide, statewide and/or national average(s) or other standards common in the field?

(C) In describing the primary interventions/solutions that your organization employs to address/solve the identified community problems, think about your organization's key activities and programs and describe how these activities help solve the identified problem(s).

(D) In this section, describe any tangible results that your organization has achieved in its work. For example, do a greater percentage of residents now have access to services that address a community need? Has public awareness about solutions to the community problem increased and if so, how do you know that it has? What evidence/data tells you that you have made progress toward or achieved your intended results?

(E) Outcomes: Note that the outcomes statement speaks to the results your organization expects to see for participants in your programs, not the activities of the program itself. A complete outcomes statement should include both (1) what you want to happen and (2) who it should happen to. For example, a nonprofit agency whose mission is to improve the quality of life for local residents by increasing access to community resources may have as one of its expected outcomes: *"Increased knowledge among neighborhood residents of available community resources."* If the organization's activities related to outreach and education were successful, then the outcome should result.

(F) Geographic Areas Served: Use the attached list of Service Planning Areas (SPAs) and zip codes to indicate where your service population resides. For more information on SPAs and zip codes, please see the United Way of Greater Los Angeles's Zip Code Data Books at: <http://www.unitedwayla.org/getinformed/rr/socialreports/Pages/ZipCodeDataBook.aspx>.

IV. RELATIONSHIP TO THE FOUNDATION'S FUNDING GOALS/STRATEGIES/OUTCOMES

This is perhaps the most important section of the LOI. It provides you with an opportunity to describe how strongly your organization's work aligns with CCF's program area goals, strategies and outcomes.

Helpful Hints: Please review the foundation's Grant Guidelines before answering this question. Read the goal, strategies and outcomes described under the program area(s) for which you are applying. How does your organization's work specifically align with these goals/strategies/outcomes?

For example, under the Health Care program area, CCF specifically focuses on building the capacity and supporting direct services of nonprofit community clinics. Is your organization a community clinic, and if so, does it serve primarily low-income and uninsured residents of Los Angeles County? Another example is under the Education program area—CCF focuses on increasing K-5 student performance through early childhood learning opportunities, parent engagement strategies, and teacher professional development. How does the education-related work of your organization incorporate one or more of these identified strategies?

V. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

State your organization's current annual operating budget and the fiscal year under which it operates. If your organization is seeking project-specific support (i.e., capacity building, capital or policy/advocacy), please state the project budget.

VI. STRATEGIC PLAN OR BUSINESS PLAN

Attach your organization's most recent strategic plan (i.e., document that describes the mission, vision, history, program goals and objectives and management goals and objectives of the agency) or business plan (i.e., document that describes the business, marketing, finances and management of the agency). If neither document exists, please explain why.

VII. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

As mentioned previously, CCF uses GuideStar's Charity Check to verify the 501(c)(3) status of organizations, therefore, confirm that your agency is listed in GuideStar (www.guidestar.org)