Requests for Proposals: Changemakers Network RFP

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<th>RFP Release Date:</th>
<th>December 12, 2019</th>
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| **Information Session:** | December 18, 2019 at The Chicago Community Trust offices from 12-1:30 p.m. (Confirmed)  
RSVP to Larissa Mariano at lmariano@cct.org by December 17th.  
**December 19, 2019**  
Zoe Life International Ministries  
5141 W. Madison  
Chicago, IL 60644  
Time 9:30-11:00am  
RSVP required via cct.org.  
National Black Wall Street Chicago  
4655 South King Drive, 2nd Flr.  
Chicago, IL 60653  
Time: 12-1:30pm  
RSVP required via cct.org. |
| Full Application Deadline: | January 17, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. (updated) |
| Site Visits: | Mid-January (As needed) |
| Announcements: | Early March |

**Overview**

Throughout history, organized communities have driven major movements for social change. This pilot initiative seeks to strengthen community-led efforts in Chicago, by improving the capacity of organizations and community organizers to solve the broad problems facing our region. This capacity-building program is anchored in the belief that everyday Chicagoans can and should directly shape and influence the issues, policies, and systems that affect their lives.

With this focus on capacity building, we aim to cultivate opportunities for historically underrepresented community organizers to learn from each other, share best practices, strengthen community voice, and co-create the movement-building strategies needed to make long-term change possible.

This open request for proposals will grant 10-12 awards of up to $200,000 over two years (a maximum of $100,000 per year) to allow organizations to participate in this peer-learning cohort to focus on a specific capacity building effort to enhance organizational and leadership effectiveness and to support their on-going community organizing efforts. Awards will recognize
an organization’s track record of success in addressing civic needs, in activating community voice, authentic connection to community, commitment to peer learning and collaboration, and impact of capacity building to enhance the organizations’ movement-building efforts.

This pilot initiative will bring together some of the Chicago region’s innovative community organizers to identify and co-create learning activities that include individual and organizational growth components focused on place-based strategies. As a peer learning effort, cohort participants will meet several times over the course of the grant period.

**Need/Oportunity Statement**

Chicago has a long rich history of community organizing where people engage in public life and redefine their relationships to each other and those in positions of power. However, in the communities most impacted by injustice there is a lack of democratic control over how economic and cultural resources are distributed and deployed. How political and economic capital flows, and to whom it flows, determines who reaps the benefits of the wealth of resources in Chicago—and who does not. We believe community organizers play an essential role in driving civic participation, community driven solutions, and participatory policymaking. A strong organizing infrastructure in communities is required in order to engage residents in civic life. With sustained support, community organizers can create the enabling conditions for resident leadership development, relationship building, and collective action.

**Goals and Outcomes**

Through this co-designed community of practice, participating organizations can expect to gain the following:

1. **Practitioner support:** Build the systems knowledge, leadership skills, and capacity of community organizers to help them become more effective agents of change within their communities and across the region.
2. **Organizational support:** Strengthen institutional capacity and growth around key organizational development needs connected to community organizing work.
3. **Network support:** Build a regional network of innovators and organizers from across communities working collaboratively to shift power between people, government and other institutions to build long term positive change.

**Grantmaking Criteria**

This pilot funding opportunity is designed to support capacity building only. We will only consider proposals that meet the following criteria:

- Organizations and community organizing leaders who reflect, serve and amplify the voices of community members from across Chicago, with an emphasis on communities that are historically underrepresented in civic discourse;
- Organizations led by and/or predominantly staffed by individuals representing communities most affected by structural racism, discrimination, or disinvestment;
• Organizations and community organizing leaders with proven success in building strong, collaborative relationships;
• Organizations and community organizing leaders who elevate the voices and priorities of their communities through the power of residents, foster a sense of collective purpose and embrace the value of co-creating; and
• Organizations that commit to sending two participants to each convening and to be involved, as a leader and a learner, in the community of practice.

Eligibility
● An applicant must be:
  ○ A nonprofit organization with evidence that it (a) has been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Code; (b) is fiscally sponsored by a Section 501(c)(3) organization; (c) or is a governmental unit within the meaning of Section 170(c)(1) of the Code;
  ○ Described in Section 170(b)(1)(A) of the Code, other than a “disqualified supporting organization” within the meaning of Section 4966(d)(4) of the Code;
  ○ Located within and/or primarily serving residents of Cook County, Illinois; and
  ○ Reporting an annual operating budget equal to or less than $2,500,000.

Sponsored organizations without 501(c)(3) status must identify their fiscal sponsor as soon as possible. Fiscal sponsors must log in and complete and certify an organization profile in The Chicago Community Trust’s grants management system, GrantCentral at https://cct.smartsimple.com prior to application submission.

Ineligible Uses
● Political activities including political campaigns
● Lobbying activities
● Organizing that facilitates religious mission or doctrine

Evaluation and Learning
The Chicago Community Trust is committed to achieving its long-term goal of closing the racial and ethnic wealth gap and realizing the organization’s overall vision of a thriving, equitable and connected Chicago region where people of all races, places and identities have the opportunity to reach their potential. Part of achieving that goal, is increasing participation of residents in civic action. To inform progress towards our vision, we are engaging with our grantee partners to describe progress towards our shared goals. As part of the application process, we are piloting a new outcomes tracking approach. When you are considering the activities and outcomes of your participation in the community of practice (see attachments to the RFP), consider how you are currently collecting and reporting your progress towards outcomes focused on civic engagement and participation in community priorities. We are asking that you describe how you currently report on outcomes associated with civic action as well as the measures of progress that you review to determine the degree to which you are on track to achieve those outcomes. In addition to the outcomes identified by potential grantees, we are engaging evaluation and learning consultant to assist in the development of common outcome measures that inform progress towards our shared mission. The consultant will be embedded throughout the cohort program. Participants will be
asked to fully engage in the co-creation in the development of outcomes, data collection and shared reporting.

**Application Process**

Applicants must complete their Organization Profile and applications via GrantCentral, the Trust’s online grants management system. Organization Profile is located on the last tab within their GrantCentral account. If the Organization Profile was completed for a previous funding opportunity, it must be reviewed and, if needed, updated and certified prior to application submission. To access an application, grant seekers must log into GrantCentral at [https://cct.smartsimple.com](https://cct.smartsimple.com).

Sponsored organizations without 501(c)(3) status must identify their fiscal sponsor as soon as possible. Fiscal sponsors must log in and complete and certify an organization profile in GrantCentral at [https://cct.smartsimple.com](https://cct.smartsimple.com) prior to application submission.

Late or incomplete full Applications will not be considered. Applicants may receive a site visit, telephone call or other communication from foundation staff as part of the application review process.

In addition to completing the application, please provide the following supplemental responses in your application.

- As a member of this peer-learning cohort, what do you hope to learn about strengthening your organization? (Make sure to address this on question #3 in the grant application)
- As a member of this peer-learning cohort, what could you teach others about strengthening their organization? (Make sure to address this on question #4 in the grant application)
- As a member of this peer-learning cohort, please identify the two people from your organization/group who can commit to participate in the peer-learning cohort. Include a short bio for each and why they are the appropriate people to participate in a peer-learning cohort on behalf of your organization/group. (Attach as additional document to the RFP)

You will be able to upload any additional documents requested in the RFP as part of your application submission in GrantCentral.

**Contact Information**

For technical questions regarding GrantCentral, email [grants@cct.org](mailto:grants@cct.org).

For programmatic and application content questions, email Maritza Bandera at [mbandera@cct.org](mailto:mbandera@cct.org).