

UUCA Social Justice Fund

2010 Grant Guidelines and Application Process

Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, VA

March 2010

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington (UUCA), Virginia, now has a new way to support social justice work – the UUCA Social Justice Fund. Grants made under this fund are made possible through a generous donation by two long-time members of UUCA. Grants totaling more than \$40,000 have been awarded to date. Following the first round of grants made last summer and a second round last fall, this third and final announcement is expected to lead to an additional \$19,000 in grant awards to be made by early summer 2010. Individual grant awards are expected to be in the \$4,000-5,000 range, based on documented need for the proposed project. Initiated in 2009, the Social Justice Fund has benefited from the first two grant application experiences, and expects to make continual improvements to ensure success of the program and its grantees. This document will serve as the official announcement and guidance for the Social Justice Fund grants, administered by the UUCA.

Purpose

The goal of the UUCA Social Justice Fund is to support projects that advance a social justice cause in the community. The specific mission of the Fund is to help build and strengthen social justice, particularly in northern Virginia. It aims to have a ripple effect by providing supportive funding in partnership with community organizations, and helping to improve the broader community through advocacy and advancement of the common good.

The focus on a “ripple effect” means that the Fund will favor projects that go beyond direct services to individuals, and seek to have broad impact in the community. Like many grant programs, the Social Justice Fund will not provide ongoing operational expenses, and it is not intended to support internal UUCA projects. However, UUCA members and groups will be encouraged to recommend potential applicants, including UUCA-affiliated organizations.

Proposals supporting leadership development and advocacy are especially encouraged. Projects can address any number of specific social justice issues, including affordable housing, racism and other forms of oppression, environmental justice, youth leadership development, coalition-building, advocacy skill development, and related areas.

Eligibility

To be eligible for consideration, an applicant must be an established 501 (c) 3 organization or a project that has secured the permission of a 501(c) 3 organization as a fiscal agent or sponsor.

Funding Priorities

Because the Social Justice Fund seeks to promote social justice and create a ripple effect, projects that propose to advance social justice through community capacity building, leadership development, and engagement with members of the community will receive the highest priority. Projects that help to address root causes of injustice and strengthen community capacity and cohesion in northern Virginia towards that goal will be given priority. We encourage proposals that involve participants from different ethnic groups and a range of ages, as feasible and consistent with the goals of the project. Proposals that demonstrate the support, in-kind or financial, of other organizations such as businesses, are especially encouraged so as to make the most of limited financial support through this grant Fund. Projects may be funded for any period of time up to one full year.

The Social Justice Fund will not support requests to fund individuals, or direct services for individuals without evidence of broader benefits, or programs that promote a particular religion or religious point of view, or general operating expenses, existing programs, or debts.

How to Apply

The application process involves two steps.

- First, a letter of intent should be submitted, identifying the name of the proposed project and other key details. Applicants are encouraged to use the Washington Grantmakers Common Grant letter of intent format, available at <http://www.washingtongrantmakers.org> (see “find info for grant seekers”) or provide similar information. (Note: this website also provides helpful tips on how to prepare a grant application and related information.)
- Second, if the letter of intent is accepted by the committee, a complete proposal then will be required. The narrative proposal should include a project title, full project description, goals and objectives and how they will be achieved, how the proposed project will “make a difference” consistent with the overall goals of the Social Justice Fund, proposed staffing, and a budget. The proposal, excluding the budget, should not exceed eight pages.

Any questions about the grant process or timetable or related issues should be directed to the committee (see contact information below). Limited technical assistance may be provided to help applicants respond effectively to this grant opportunity.

Proposals will be reviewed by the Social Justice Fund committee. Applicants may be asked for further information, or to participate in an interview with committee members regarding the proposed project.

All applicants will be notified of the final results of this grant competition. The decisions of the committee will be final. Successful applicants will receive a letter of award stating the amount of the grant, the period of time for which the funds are available, and any special conditions the committee believes are necessary to assure success of the project. Funds will be made available

soon after such notification, with the expectation that up to half of the funds will be allotted initially, with the remainder available upon submission of a progress report. All projects must be completed within one year of the date of grant award.

Reporting Requirements

All grantees must provide a narrative progress report at the end of the first half of the period of performance, not to exceed five typewritten pages. The report shall identify major developments, along with any obstacles encountered, with suggestions to solve them. Upon acceptance of the report, the committee will authorize the second half of funding.

At the conclusion of the project, grantees will be asked to complete a brief feedback report to the committee, focusing on the grant concept and procedures and how they might be improved. Grantees may also be invited to make a final presentation to the committee and selected others; this presentation may be supplemented if the grantee wishes with a brief written report, including evidence of success, testimonials, photographs, or other materials to help document the implementation of the project.

Any grantee that fails to complete the feedback questionnaire will not be eligible for any further grants under the Social Justice Fund.

Schedule and Timetable

This final round of grants will follow this schedule:

- Letters of intent due by Monday, April 5
- Notification of applicants to develop full proposals by Monday, April 26
- Full proposals (by invitation only) by Friday, May 21
- Notification of grant awards by June 30

All submissions are due by 6 p.m. ET on the dates shown above.

Points of Contact

General information about the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington may be accessed at the church's website, www.UUCAVA.org.

Questions about the requirements and application process may be directed to the committee at Justicefund.uuca@gmail.com.

Letters of intent should be submitted to Justicefund.uuca@gmail.com.

Frequently Asked Questions about the UUCA Social Justice Fund

1. **Where did the Social Justice Fund come from?** The source of the Social Justice Fund was a donation from two long-time UUCA members. The Fund total is \$60,000, to be made available to UUCA over two years, provided it is used to support social justice. The UUCA Board of Trustees approved setting up the Social Justice Fund.
2. **Who may apply and what kinds of projects may be considered?** Nonprofit community organizations may apply; preference will go to groups based in Northern Virginia. Since the mission of the Social Justice Fund is to have a “ripple effect” in building social justice, preference will go to projects and events that intend to have an impact beyond the immediate recipients. Possible focal points include leadership development or advocacy (including self-advocacy) around social justice issues.
3. **What is the size of typical grants, and how are grants to be disbursed?** We anticipate that grants will range from about \$4,000 to \$6,000. Justice Fund grants will typically be disbursed with one half “up front” once an award has been made, with the second half upon submission of a progress report.
4. **How can UUCA groups participate in the Social Justice Fund?** UUCA groups, as well as UUCA members and friends, are encouraged to inform community organizations about the fund and to suggest possible applicants to the Social Justice Fund committee. UUCA groups may also wish to support community organizations in planning their applications or implementing their projects.
5. **How can I reach the Social Justice Fund?** Use the e-mail address, Justicefund.uuca@gmail.com or contact one of the committee members directly (Bob Denniston, Sharon Sundial, John Zeray).
6. **What is required to submit a letter of intent?** Interested organizations may send a letter of intent that includes the name of the proposed project and other key details, including a proposed budget. We encourage applicants to use a standard format that includes all of the necessary information, available from the Washington Grantmakers, at <http://www.washingtongrantmakers.org> (see “find info for grant seekers”).
7. **What organizations received grants in the prior two rounds?** UUCA's Social Justice Fund committee is pleased to report that its first grants were awarded to five recipients chosen from 19 applicants: *Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment (ACE)* for Enhancing Environmental Awareness in Multicultural Audiences. The project includes bilingual materials, outreach, and supplies for energy-efficiency, recycling/reuse, composting, and more. *Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH)* to help fund the Columbia Grove Resident Services Program. The project intertwines ESL and financial literacy at a neighborhood center in a neighborhood with a mostly immigrant, mostly low-income population. It includes an innovative Americorps component, which may be replicable in other communities. *Beacon House* for a Peace Club project that will expand Peace Camp-like principles and practices throughout the year. *Friends of Guest*

House to enhance a nascent Speakers Bureau for nonviolent female ex-offenders, who will receive training and small honoraria to educate lawmakers in Richmond and to speak to at-risk girls and other audiences (faith groups, for example) in various areas. This builds on a tiny pilot project, and it too may be replicable elsewhere. *Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light (GW IPL)* to build awareness and advocacy skills among church leaders and congregations in Northern Virginia so that they can expand grassroots projects to help educate state legislators and opinion leaders on a variety of green issues.

In the second round, four groups were awarded grants from among 18 applicants. Grantees are: *Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically (ALIVE!)*, which will conduct a client-advocacy pilot project to identify and empower *ALIVE!*'s clients in obtaining additional services to which they are legally entitled. The project will blend with *ALIVE!*'s food mission which helps disadvantaged families in Alexandria obtain food security. *Greenbrier Learning Center (GBLC)* will provide after-school and summer programs to children from low-income, immigrant and refugee backgrounds. *GBLC* actively partners with families and schools to develop primary school students academically and socially. The grant will support training and professional development for the AmeriCorps team's Learning Links program in south Arlington. *Phoenix Bikes* will create a space for middle school "tweens" to participate in high quality after-school activities. With an emphasis on engaging low-income and recent immigrant populations, the program fosters community service through the Earn-A-Bike program, and develops team problem-solving, communication, and mechanic skills in a youth-led nonprofit bike shop that serves Arlington. The *Shirlington Employment and Education Center (SEEC)* serves day laborers and legal residents who need temporary work and trains workers on how to document their work, wages, and employers' contact information. *SEEC* will use grant money to assist day laborers recover unpaid wages from employers through the intermediation of a paralegal.

8. **Are successful applicants eligible for further grants from this fund?** Yes. However, there is a preference to ensure that the funds support a wide array of social justice projects.
9. **Are applicants that were unsuccessful in the earlier rounds eligible to apply in this final round?** Yes. Those organizations that applied but were not successful are eligible to submit a letter of intent for this third and final round of grants.