


TO: Ken Zimmerman
FROM: *Name of Director, Fund/Campaign Name*
DATE: *Date of Submission*
RE: *Blurbs for Fund/Campaign Name, Date of Docket Meeting, please note if Out-of-Docket*

PURPOSE

 The purpose of a blurb is to provide a brief description of the recommended grant, offer context to help articulate the connection to programmatic strategy and flag any potential issues, concerns or questions with the grant you intend to recommend.

SUGGESTED STRUCTURE

In a short paragraph, the introduction should include:

I. INTRODUCTION

- Number of Grant Proposals
- Total Amount of Grant Proposals
- % of Total Budget
- YTD Total Spending
- Any clustering of grants, if applicable, including: the number of general support grants and project support grants; grants that support fields and foundation-led concepts; renewal grants and new grants; tie-off grants, etc.
- How do grants fit within your Program Strategy?*

* Note that restating program objectives is *not necessary*. Introductions are intended to be an informal overview, so please submit blurbs by deadline even if some introductory information is unavailable at the time they are due. Fund/Campaigns are *not* expected to assemble all the information at the expense of incurring delays to providing the summary to Ken. Priority should be placed on providing information on any significant issues, concerns, or questions to accompany the analysis or status of thinking involved, rather than format.

BLURB INTRODUCTION EXAMPLES

JUSTICE FUND

The Justice Fund is considering 13 proposals for funding in U.S. Programs Docket II, slated for July 17, 2013. These grants represent a total of up to \$3,665,000, of which \$3,215,000 will be drawn from the Justice Fund's 2013 budget. These proposed recommendations include eight (8) grants that would support our priority of reducing mass incarceration, two (2) that would advance our priority of challenging extreme punishment and three (3) that advance our goal of promoting justice system accountability. Twelve (12) of the thirteen (13) proposed grants are renewals; seven (7) will recommend general operating support to our grantee partners and six (6) will support targeted and discrete projects; all are investments to support the various fields in which we work. One grant also supports a foundation-led concept through continued funding of a key organization involved in the Campaign to Abolish the Death Penalty by 2025 in which we continue to play a leadership role. Three of our recommendations are proposed as tie-off grants. These are recommended in consideration of the wind-down of our current strategies related to public defense reform as Fund staff seek to assess the impact of our prior investments on the improvement of indigent defense delivery and systems, and to evaluate what new strategies we might propose in this area in 2014.

DEMOCRACY FUND

The Democracy Fund is considering the six proposals described below for inclusion on U.S. Programs' second docket. They would total \$1,450,000, of which \$1,150,000 would come from the Democracy Fund's 2013 budget, \$100,000 from the 'Tie-off Reserve Fund' (for the final grant to the National Priorities Project), and \$200,000 from the Core Grants line (for the Demos grant). If approved, these grants would advance work in two of the Fund's three portfolios -- responsive and effective government and political equality. All six grants are recommended by Tom Hilbink; the grant to Demos is jointly recommended by Tom and Laleh Ispahani. Two of the 6 are final grants, both in the responsive and effective government portfolio. They are final grants because we narrowed our strategy in that area last year.

II. CONTENT

Recommending Staff Member(s)	
Legal Name of Grantee	
Recommended Grant Amount	
Proposed Grant Term	
Organization Budget	
Type of Support	
Purpose of the Grant	
Support of field or foundation-led concept	
Advancement of a particular strategy(-ies)	
Any organizational dynamics to highlight*	

* *i.e. Major leadership transitions, financial fluctuations, strategic redirection or organizational restructuring. Staff should focus on providing Ken with enough information that takes into account what he already knows about the proposed grant to maximize the quality feedback received in return.*

DOCKET II BLURB EXAMPLES

JUSTICE FUND

Legal Name of Grantee:	A Better Way Foundation
Recommending staff member:	William Johnston, Andy Ko
Recommended grant amount:	Up to \$200,000
Proposed grant term:	2 years (3:1 matching grant for year 2)
Type of support:	Renewed general support
Organization budget:	\$180,000

A Better Way Foundation (ABWF) is a Hartford, Connecticut-based grassroots organization whose mission is to shift Connecticut's current drug policy from a paradigm that prioritizes incarceration to one that prioritizes public health, addiction treatment and public safety. The organization leads a broad coalition of social service providers, university students, researchers, community development experts, and civil rights organizations working toward sentencing and drug policy reform. ABWF's policy reform focus includes expanding judicial discretion in drug cases, marijuana law reform, eliminating crack/powder sentencing disparities, promoting harm reduction programming, protecting people from criminal prosecution for administering overdose treatment medicines, monitoring parity in insurance coverage for people with mental health and substance abuse issues, and increasing state funding for substance abuse treatment and alternatives to incarceration.

This grant represents field support to an important grantee to advance the Justice Fund's outside strategy for promoting policies and practices that reduce mass incarceration by strengthening the capacity of state-based organizations with strong community ties and credibility to inform the justice reform debate in their state and nationally by highlighting the social trade-offs associated with such large public investments in incarceration. It would also advance the Campaign for a New Drug Policy's outside strategy to cultivate non-punitive alternatives to drug use, and to harness opportunities from the Affordable Care Act in doing so. ABWF advances its policy goals within a strategic model that emphasizes community empowerment and cultivation of local residents to lead advocacy efforts. As a sophisticated and highly successful advocacy group doing work in a defined geographic and political context, ABWF has been an important partner of a number of national organizations and peer advocacy groups around the country. Within the drug policy and justice reform movements, Executive Director Lorenzo Jones and former Executive Director Robert Rooks (now organizing director at Justice Fund grantee Californians for Safety and Justice) are very well known and respected, as is the organization and approach that they developed at ABWF. ABWF has been an important conduit through which not only have the key priorities and strategies of the drug policy reform movement gained some acceptance in the African-American community, but through which the concerns and priorities of the African-American community have been injected into and taken seriously by the drug policy reform movement.

ABWF's importance and effectiveness in the field has not translated into sufficiently diverse, secure, and sustainable revenue streams, and the organization continues to struggle even as it has continued to accrue policy win after policy win in the state. Justice Fund and Campaign for New Drug Policy staff continue to work closely with ABWF leadership and other funders and leaders in the field to help strengthen the organization and help it toward financial sustainability. Because OSF's annual funding to ABWF represents such a high percentage (42%) of its budget, our grant recommendation will require a 3:1 matching requirement for the second year grant installment.

DEMOCRACY FUND

Legal Name of Grantee:	Good Jobs First
Recommending staff member:	Tom Hilbink
Recommended grant amount:	\$100,000
Proposed grant term:	1 year
Type of support:	General support; final grant
Organization budget:	\$1,075,000

We recommend final grants to **Good Jobs First** and the **National Priorities Project**, groups that gather “data for democracy,” information that fuels the advocacy of many in the social justice community, including those in the transparency policy field. These are final grants because, when we tightened budgets last year, we narrowed our grant making strategy to support only the leaders of the small, well-coordinated field of D.C.-based transparency policy organizations. Good Jobs First and the National Priorities Project, while highly effective, are not among them, playing an important but distinct, ‘supporting role’ of sorts. (Unfortunately, because of this “supporting” nature, other funders are less drawn to support their work.)

We recommend \$100,000 over one year in general support to **Good Jobs First**. To date, we have provided Good Jobs First project support to design, build, and publicize Subsidy Tracker, a tool that collects information on government-funded economic development subsidies in the states and in D.C., so that we may understand how and in what guise taxpayer dollars are funneled to corporations, and then be able to assess the impact of these subsidies. Advocates such as the Transportation Equity Network have used this data to urge state and local governments to shift economic development expenditures towards projects that create high-wage jobs, build infrastructure, and benefit workers rather than enriching corporate executives. In December, the New York Times used Good Jobs First’s data as the primary basis for a major [three-part investigation](#) into corporate tax deals and their impact on state budgets. This is a final grant because, as above, the Fund now only supports the leaders of the federal transparency policy and practice field, and while Good Jobs First does some work on federal policy (and was engaged heavily around implementation of the \$750 billion federal recovery package), its core work is state-level job creation. Though a member of the [Open the Government coalition](#), Good Jobs First is not among the field’s leaders—a set that includes the Project on Government Oversight, the Center for Effective Government and the Government Accountability Project. Although the organization no longer fits as squarely within the Democracy Fund transparency portfolio, we can see it playing a valuable role in the Project on Work.

Legal Name of Grantee:	National Priorities Project
Recommending staff member:	Tom Hilbink
Recommended grant amount:	\$100,000
Proposed grant term:	1 year
Type of support:	General support; final grant
Organization budget:	\$758,230

The second grant, to the **National Priorities Project** (NPP), is a \$100,000 grant over one year in general support. NPP’s mission is to help advocates and community leaders better understand federal spending and the federal budget process. As federal spending is relentlessly (and often misleadingly) attacked by the right, NPP has provided easy access to the facts as well as timely analysis of key spending debates. To ensure its data is used by advocates, NPP has developed alliances with many U.S. Programs grantees including U.S. Action, Jobs with Justice, PICO, and the Roosevelt Institute. Its work complements that of groups such as the Economic Policy Institute and the Center on Budget & Policy Priorities. Its specific focus is on assisting grassroots organizations to understand and engage in budget battles. Until now, NPP was co-funded by the former Democracy & Power Fund, which is not participating in this final grant. Like Good Jobs First, NPP is only tangentially engaged in federal transparency policy work, and given our new strategy; we have informed NPP that this will likely serve as a final general support grant. The Project on Work, however, foresees possibly supporting NPP in the future.

CAMPAIGN FOR BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT

Legal Name of Grantee:	Oakland Unified School District
Recommending staff member:	Shawn Dove
Recommended grant amount:	\$400,000
Proposed grant term:	2 years
Type of support:	Project support; renewal
Organization budget:	n/a

A renewed project support grant to the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) will provide funding for the Office of African American Male Achievement (AAMA), a district-wide strategy that uses data to identify entry points for strategic interventions to increase equity, improve cultural competency of teachers and administrators, and implement practices that support improved academic outcomes for black male students. CBMA's previous support, along with funding partners such as the California Endowment and Atlantic Philanthropies, helped AAMA to launch the department, develop its infrastructure, including its community engagement strategy and development of evaluation

metrics. Since its inception in 2010, the AAMA has found that students' grades and attendance have improved while behavioral problems and school suspension have been reduced. AAMA will use renewed CBMA support to execute the five-year Voluntary Resolution plan created in partnership with the Office of Civil Rights and to continue the Manhood Development program. The Voluntary Resolution plan is a new initiative focused on eliminating unfair school-discipline and push-out practices that have led to inequity in student discipline and assignment to Special Education for black students. Through partnership with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, AAMA plans to take a system-wide approach to transforming school climate, which will include the implementation of restorative justice practices and addressing a lack of comprehensive, wrap-around services for students. Renewed funding of OUSD advances CBMA's goal of ensuring that black boys have the opportunity to excel academically, to prepare for college, and to learn skills essential to earning a living wage. This grant also advances the broader US Programs School Discipline strategy of supporting alternative models and district-wide approaches that address student misbehavior and trains school personnel that lead to improved school climate.

EQUALITY FUND

Legal Name of Grantee:	City Life/Vida Urbana (CL/VU)
Recommending staff member:	Solomon Greene
Recommended grant amount:	\$150,000
Proposed grant term:	1 year
Type of support:	Project support; tie-off
Organization budget:	\$888,685

A project support grant to City Life/Vida Urbana (CL/VU) will solidify the gains made from OSF's earlier investments in CL/VU's Bank Tenant Association (BTA) model, which has successfully organized owners and tenants facing eviction due to foreclosure to remain in their homes after foreclosure and reach sustainable resolutions with lenders. In the two years since OSF originally funded CL/VU to expand its organizing model to other communities in the Boston region and train organizations in other cities around the country on post-foreclosure defense strategies, CL/VU's BTA campaign has become a national model for community-led responses to the foreclosure crisis. A renewal grant will allow CL/VU to: 1) define mechanisms for sustaining current BTA replication sites independently; 2) conduct trainings and produce and disseminate training materials to strengthen anti-foreclosure displacement organizing regionally and nationally; 3) and build partnerships with community-minded investors to acquire foreclosed properties and resell to residents or aid in keeping tenants and homeowners in their homes. The recommended grant advances the goals of the Neighborhood Stabilization Initiative to stabilize communities hardest hit by the foreclosure crisis and its specific grant making priorities of 1) overcoming the bottleneck in loan modifications; 2) facilitating the reuse of foreclosed properties as affordable housing for low-income households and particularly vulnerable populations; and 3) protecting the rights of renters in foreclosed properties. Although the Neighborhood Stabilization Initiative wound down last year, staff recommends a final tie-off grant to CL/VU to consolidate gains from past investments, transition newly formed BTA affiliate groups to independent status, and to strengthen the national infrastructure for organizing tenants and homeowners in foreclosed properties to fight displacement.

Legal Name of Grantee:	Center for Social Inclusion
Recommending staff member:	Solomon Greene
Recommended grant amount:	\$100,000
Proposed grant term:	1 year
Type of support:	General support; renewal
Organization budget:	\$3,115,580

A general support grant to the Center for Social Inclusion (CSI) will enable it to continue its efforts to develop strategies to dismantle structural inequality. Founded in 2002 by Maya Wiley, CSI is a national policy advocacy organization that serves as a bridge between the worlds of policy research and grassroots activism. All of CSI's projects are built using three important tools: ideas; leadership development; and communications. Its programmatic focus includes: energy democracy; transportation equity; broadband equity; and food equity. Woven throughout these four areas is attention to promoting transparency, accountability, and community participation in policy development. Within the U.S. racial justice movement, there are only a few national intermediary organizations that supply grassroots racial justice advocates with the research and strategic support needed to dismantle structural barriers. CSI has been an important partner for a range of U.S. Programs funds and initiatives, including the Equality and Transparency Funds, the Campaign for Black Male Achievement and the former Neighborhood Stabilization Initiative and Seize the Day Fund. Because of its skill in addressing the racial implications of diverse open society concerns, the Equality Fund advocated for CSI to become an Equality "core" grantee. The recommended grant will provide general support from the Anchor and Core Grantee budget line for CSI's ongoing work to identify the causes of racial inequity at the systems level and to develop concrete solutions to those problems. There also may be a future opening to support CSI's work as EF strengthens its investment in developing a 21st century racial narrative, but it is too early to commit at this time.