

**The Transparency Fund
Planned Grants for Docket I
March 21, 2012**

The Transparency Fund supports groups working to promote: 1) broad access to information, 2) high-quality accountability journalism on critical open society issues, 3) an impartial and diverse judiciary, and 4) broad and equitable access to the ballot. This Fund includes a portfolio of 65 grantees with a grantmaking budget of \$14.5 million in 2012. On this docket, we will present ten grants for approval, our contribution roughly totaling \$3.45 million. Please let us know if you have thoughts about any of these recommendations.

I. Broad Access to Information

Center for Media Justice

Project Support, \$300,000 over 2 years (renewal)

The Center for Media Justice is a key organization in the national media and information policy field and serves a critical role in connecting local grassroots media justice groups, national media and information policy groups, and civil society groups focused on other issues, such as immigrants' rights, healthcare, civic engagement, and economic justice. This grant would support the Center's Media Rights and Access Program, which is focused on four broad goals: 1) expanding the capacity, scope and impact of regional organizing for public interest media and information policies; 2) building the leadership and skills of individuals and groups committed to media accountability; 3) developing model media and information policies for racial and economic justice; and 4) strengthening connections among small, local grassroots media justice groups, national media and information policy groups, and non-media related civil society organizations. This grant would advance the Transparency Fund's goal of supporting information policy that ensures an open, democratic communications infrastructure for speech, information, and knowledge exchange.

II. Journalism for an Open Society

The Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University

Project Support, \$250,000 over two years (renewal) (grant amount still tentative)

This project support grant would support the Digital Media Law Project (the Project) at Harvard University's Berkman Center for Internet and Society. The Project works to ensure that individuals and organizations involved in online journalism and digital media have access to essential legal resources, education, tools, and representation. The Project, which launched in May 2007, focuses its work on three broad areas: legal education and training; litigation and *pro bono* legal services; and the collection and analysis of legal threats facing online speakers and publishers. This grant would support the Project's work to address essential legal needs within the noncommercial journalism community, specifically supporting the Project's ongoing work providing legal education, assistance, and research on the legal threats facing journalists and online media. All of OSF's journalism grantees, and many other important noncommercial journalism organizations are using the Project's services. Support for the Project would advance the Transparency Fund's goal of strengthening accountability journalism on critical open society issues at the state and local level. In addition to supporting individual journalism outlets, the

Fund has identified the need to support a select group of organizations that are providing critical shared services to the rapidly evolving noncommercial journalism sector as a whole.

New Orleans Lens (Fiscal Sponsor: The Center for Public Integrity)

General Support, \$400,000 over two years (renewal) (grant amount still tentative)

The New Orleans Lens (the Lens) is a noncommercial accountability journalism organization working to inform, engage, and empower the residents of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast by providing the information and analysis necessary to hold the public and private sector accountable. The Lens produces high-quality journalism and data-driven investigation and analysis on Gulf Coast issues including criminal justice, education, local government, the environment, the economy, land use, and politics. The Lens is paying close attention to the newsgathering and public engagement experiments of other noncommercial news organizations, including OSF grantee the Voice of San Diego, and successfully adapting them to the New Orleans context. Recognizing that less than 50 percent of the New Orleans population is online, the Lens has developed partnerships with television, radio, and print outlets. The Lens is a part of the OSF-supported New Orleans Coalition of Open Governance. Support for the Lens would advance the Transparency Fund's goal of strengthening accountability journalism on critical open society issues at the state and local level.

Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism

General Support, \$350,000 over two years (renewal) (grant amount still tentative)

The Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism (the Center) is a noncommercial accountability journalism organization that aims to increase the quality and availability of public interest and investigative news reporting across Wisconsin. OSF support enabled the Center to launch in 2009 as a first-of-its-kind alliance with public broadcasting journalists in six cities around the state, plus students and faculty of the journalism school at Wisconsin's flagship university. The Center produces investigative reports independently and in partnership with Wisconsin Public Broadcasting. The Center assists a range of Wisconsin news outlets, including ethnic media, to pursue their own investigations or produce joint projects. The Center focuses on government integrity, environment, justice system, education, economic issues, health and public safety. Support for the Center would advance the Transparency Fund's goal of strengthening accountability journalism on critical open society issues at the state and local level.

Voice of San Diego

General Support \$400,000 over two years (renewal) (grant amount still tentative)

The Voice of San Diego (the Voice) is recognized as a national leader in noncommercial local beat and investigative reporting on local and state politics, education, environment, housing, and the economy. The Voice aims to increase broad public participation in the San Diego region, and believes that in addition to having access to independent and reliable news and information, communities need sufficient context to make sense of that information and a guide to help them understand how they can become active participants in community affairs. In addition to its high quality reporting, the Voice is a recognized leader in using both digital media and in-person events to engage with the public. Previous OSF support enabled the Voice to hire a public engagement editor, and to experiment with civic engagement activities such as Politifest, a Lincoln/Douglas-style mayoral debate among seven candidates organized within a community festival that included children's activities, food, and music. Support for the Voice would advance

the Transparency Fund's goal of strengthening accountability journalism on critical open society issues at the state and local level.

Investigative Reporting Program of the Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, University of California, Berkeley

Project Support, \$400,000 over two years (grant amount still tentative)

The Investigative Reporting Program (IRP) of the Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism functions both as a specialized graduate-level training program and as a noncommercial news organization. It has pioneered high-quality, in-depth accountability reporting for major broadcast, print, and online outlets across the country. In the last decade, IRP students have produced dozens of stories on subjects including corruption in Mexico, the role of U.S. defense contractors in Nigeria and Saudi Arabia, and the environmental and social impact of American gold mining in Peru. Law enforcement and other government agencies, Congress, and state legislatures have cited IRP findings, launched investigations, and initiated or passed legislation because of IRP work. The IRP serves as a unique training ground for reporters conducting complicated investigations of multinational corporations. Vast sums of corporate money alter the course of governments around the world, often invisibly and counter to the public good, and mainstream news organizations are no longer willing or able to devote the resources necessary to undertake these long, complicated, legally dangerous investigations. IRP was founded in 1991 by Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter Lowell Bergman, a producer/correspondent for the PBS documentary series *Frontline* and former investigative correspondent for the *New York Times*. The story of his investigation of the tobacco industry for *60 Minutes* was chronicled in the Academy Award nominated film *The Insider*. Support for IRP would advance the Transparency Fund's goal of strengthening accountability journalism on critical open society issues. It would also support the Fund's goal of increasing or improving the production, distribution, and reach of international reporting for U.S. audiences.

Center for Public Integrity

Project Support, \$600,000 over two years (grant amount still tentative)

Founded 20 years ago, the Center for Public Integrity's mission is to produce original investigative journalism about significant public issues to make the actions of those who wield institutional power more transparent. The Center works in six areas: money and politics; environment and workplace safety; business and economic justice; health; national security; and international cross-border investigations. The Center disseminates its reports on its website and social media platforms as well as through influential media outlets including *The New York Times*, The BBC World Service, *The Atlantic*, NPR, CBS, the PBS NewsHour, *The Financial Times*, and Politico. In late 2011, the Center launched the *Consider the Source* project, led by veteran investigative journalist John Dunbar, with the initial focus on the 2012 presidential election. The long-term goal of *Consider the Source* is to expose to a broad readership the propaganda industry that influences policy at all levels of government. OSF support would enable the Center to expand *Consider the Source* to include state level reporting. The Center, in partnership with state news outlets, will provide in-depth investigative reporting about the special interest influences on state governments and state officials. The Center will identify key states where the post-*Citizens United* impact is the strongest and will identify reporting partnerships in those states, in print, broadcast or online. This reporting will become both a larger national narrative and powerful local reporting to reach state and national audiences. The

project's objectives are to use data and excellent investigative reporting to analyze trends and expose influence across the nation. Support for the Center advances the Transparency Fund's goal of strengthening accountability journalism on critical open society issues at the state and local level. It would also advance OSF's interest in addressing the undue influence of money on the American political process. The Fund has developed this grant with the Center as an alternative to the money and politics reporting fellowship idea that was presented to the OSF board. This grant will be structured to address the concerns of the OSF board with respect to the original project we had intended to house at the Arizona State University.

III. Fair, Impartial and Diverse Courts

Center for American Progress

Project Support, \$350,000 over one year (new grant)(to eventually be aligned with larger grant to CAP)

The Center for American Progress (CAP) is a think tank that develops, analyzes, and disseminates policy ideas while engaging in debates on key issues in American politics and society. Legal Progress is CAP's new legal policy program that has a particular focus on federal judicial nominations. Legal Progress seeks funding for a recently developed project that aims to make the courts and judicial nominations a key issue for grassroots constituencies. The project is developing and implementing a bottom-up program that educates advocates on why courts matter for the issues they care about while providing the means for these advocates to engage in the broader debate about judicial nominations. Legal Progress is currently deploying this program in Texas and Florida, and seeks additional funding to support expansion of the project in three more states (current candidates are Nevada, Colorado, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin). The Fund will integrate this work with that of its two other grantees working on grassroots judicial nominations. Funding this project will support CAP's cultivation and coordination of state efforts, including the re-granting of funds to state partners. The HJW Foundation has agreed to fund the remainder of the project budget. This grant would advance the Transparency Fund's goal of supporting the development of effective models for grassroots education and organizing related to federal judicial nominations.

National Congress of American Indians Fund

Project Support, \$250,000 over two years (renewal contingent)

The National Congress of American Indians Fund (NCAIF) is the 501(c)(3) arm of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). Founded in 1944, NCAI is the oldest and largest American Indian, Hawaiian Native, and Alaska Native membership organization, serving a diverse network of over 250 tribes representing more than three quarters of the national population of indigenous Americans. Renewal support would allow NCAIF to continue its work on the federal judiciary and federal nominations, including: mentoring Native American attorneys interested in federal court judgeships; meeting with circuit court judges to raise awareness and understanding of Indian law and culture, and; working with local tribes to develop connections to Senators. This funding will also support ongoing efforts to build active Native American constituencies for judicial nominations advocacy. The grant would advance the Transparency Fund's goal of supporting efforts to diversify the judiciary and support the development of effective models for grassroots education and organizing related to federal judicial nominations.

Wisconsin Democracy Campaign

General Support, \$150,000 over two years (renewal contingent)

The Wisconsin Democracy Campaign is that state's leading organization dedicated to reforms that decrease the influence of money in state politics and policy making. As a result of its work, WDC hopes to increase public confidence in government leaders and institutions. It pursues this work through a combination of research, public education, organizing, and advocacy. In carrying out this mission, WDC tracks the money in state politics (including judicial elections) and works for campaign finance reform and other government and election-related reforms through research, education, community outreach, coalition building and direct advocacy. For the coming two years, WDC has laid out two areas of special focus. The first involves raising awareness of and opposition to recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings unleashing corporate election spending and undermining traditional approaches to public financing of elections through its ongoing *United Citizens Against Citizens United* education campaign and petition drive. The second involves reframing the public debate over election financing, creating a new paradigm for public financing adapted to new legal and political realities. The grant would advance the Transparency Fund's goal of mitigating the adverse impacts of the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. It would also advance the Fund's goal of ensuring fair, impartial, and diverse courts.