
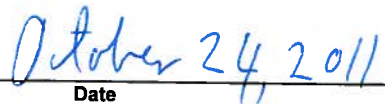


**U.S. PROGRAMS**  
**Democracy and Power Fund**  
**Summary of Recommended Grants**  
**Catch-up Docket - October 24, 2011**

**U.S. Programs, Democracy and Power Fund**

| Organization  | Grant Code | Recommended       | Term     | 2011             | 2012             | 2013             |
|---|------------|-------------------|----------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Idea Generation</b>  |            |                   |          |                  |                  |                  |
| Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest                            | T1: 21114  | \$100,000         | 2 years  | \$50,000         | \$50,000         |                  |
| <b>Voter Participation</b>  |            |                   |          |                  |                  |                  |
| Arab American Institute Foundation <sup>1</sup>                       | T1: 21113  | \$150,000         | 2 years  |                  | \$75,000         | \$75,000         |
|   | T1: 21132  | \$200,000         | 2 years  |                  | \$100,000        | \$100,000        |
| Funders' Committee for Civic Participation (Public Interest Projects) | T1:21113   | \$100,000         | 2 years  |                  | \$50,000         | \$50,000         |
| Youth Engagement Fund (Tides Center)                                  | T1:21113   | \$300,000         | 9 months | \$300,000        |                  |                  |
| <b>Total Recommended:</b>   |            | <b>\$850,000</b>  |          | <b>\$350,000</b> | <b>\$275,000</b> | <b>\$225,000</b> |
| <b>GRANTMAKING TOTAL THIS DOCKET:</b>                                 |            | <b>\$ 850,000</b> |          |                  |                  |                  |

  
Approval Signature

  
Date

<sup>1</sup> This grant of \$350,000 to Arab American Institute Foundation is co-funded by Democracy and Power Fund, T1: 21113 (\$150,000), and National Security and Human Rights Campaign, T1: 21132 (\$200,000)

## MEMORANDUM

To: Aryeh Neier  
From: Bill Vandenberg, for the Democracy and Power Fund  
Date: October 17, 2011  
Re: Democracy and Power Fund Catch-up Docket Recommendations

We look forward to discussing with you our final recommendations for 2011 at the Democracy and Power Fund's "catch-up" docket on Monday, October 24. The write-ups and a docket sheet are attached here.

In this docket, we bring five recommendations to you totaling \$1.15 million, including \$200,000 in co-funding support from the National Security and Human Rights Campaign. Our recommendations are all for renewals and include idea generation and non-partisan voter engagement grantees. The voter engagement recommendations, 13 months prior to the 2012 election, reflect our commitment to providing funding to organizations that seek as early as possible to build robust, large scale, community-rooted, and high impact voter participation programs. Our recommendations include:

### **Ideas: Generating Innovative Open Society Policies**

#### **Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest**

To provide a renewal general support grant of \$100,000 over two years to the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest, a Washington, DC-based organization that protects the ability of nonprofits to engage in lobbying and other forms of advocacy through reports, media, and trainings. The Center has proven itself to be a trusted source of information for non-profit organizations on how to conduct advocacy in response to legislation and regulations that affect their work. It has also successfully raised awareness of advocacy-related restrictions on Legal Services Corporation grantees, leading to the loosening of several restrictions. Since 2009, the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest has worked with OSI-DC to spotlight the Obama Administration's Executive Order on the hiring of lobbyists, a sweeping order that has precluded many public interest advocates from working in the Obama Administration. The Center has also been a dedicated advocate for the rights of non-profits to lobby and not have their advocacy voice limited by politically driven regulations.

#### **Progressive States Network**

To provide a renewal general support grant of \$300,000 over two years to the Progressive States Network, a multi-issue idea generation and advocacy intermediary that supports state legislators with background research on economic, election, health care, and immigration policies. Progressive States Network links legislators and state-based advocates across state lines and works in partnership with academic experts, think tanks, and local, state, and national advocacy groups. The Network works with hundreds of legislators who identify as progressive nationally and creates model legislation, fact sheets, and communications strategies that are distributed to state legislators and legislative aides, raising awareness of state-specific legislative campaigns, and promoting consistent messages across states to reinforce open society friendly advocacy messages nationally.

## **Voting: Expanding Non-Partisan Voter Participation from Key Constituencies**

### **Arab American Institute Foundation**

To provide a renewal general support grant of \$350,000 over two years to the Arab American Institute Foundation. The Arab American Institute, based in Washington, DC, engages in research, educational outreach, public opinion research, coalition building, and leadership development programs to promote awareness of and equality for the Arab American community. The Democracy and Power Fund initially began funding the Arab American Institute via a grant to its Yalla Vote (“Let’s Go Vote”) project, an effective, community-rooted civic education and non-partisan voter participation project in several of the largest Arab American communities across the country. We now recommend general support in recognition of the Institute’s broader priorities and are joined in this recommendation by the National Security and Human Rights Campaign.

### **Funders’ Committee for Civic Participation**

To provide a renewal project grant of \$100,000 over two years to the Funders' Committee for Civic Participation. The Funders’ Committee for Civic Participation, a philanthropic affinity group that is housed at Public Interest Projects, brings together grantmakers committed to enhancing non-partisan democratic involvement in all dimensions of civic life, including elections, governance, media, and civil society. The Funders’ Committee has a particular emphasis on historically disenfranchised and underrepresented communities. Since the 1980s, the Funders’ Committee has been a driving force in the donor community in advancing effective voter registration and education, supporting campaign finance reform, and exploring new voting technologies and effective voter engagement strategies. Several USP programs participate in leadership roles within the Funders’ Committee, including the Democracy and Power and Transparency and Integrity Funds. Disclosure: Bill Vandenberg serves as OSF’s elected representative on the Funders’ Committee for Civic Participation’s Steering Committee.

### **Youth Engagement Fund**

To provide a renewal project grant of \$300,000 over nine months to the Youth Engagement Fund, a collaborative effort between individual and institutional donors that has been the central vehicle for supporting non-profit youth civic engagement infrastructure for the past two election cycles. OSF has been a supporter since its founding and is joined by Democracy Alliance donors and other foundations. The Fund provides regranting support to nearly two dozen youth civic engagement organizations and has supported tools and products that create economies of scale for the field. Groups supported by the Youth Engagement Fund registered 1.7 million young voters in the 2008 election cycle. The Youth Engagement Fund has also helped leverage access to data, analytics, and polling capacity for the youth field. Disclosure: Bill Vandenberg serves as OSF’s representative on the Youth Engagement Fund’s Advisory Committee.

Complete write-ups for our recommendations follow this memo. We look forward to discussing these recommendations with you when we meet next week. Please let me know if there is further information I may provide in advance of the docket meeting. Thank you.

**Democracy and Power Grant Recommendations**  
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**Grant ID:** 20033981

**Legal Name of Organization:** Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest

**Tax Status:** 501(c)(3) public charity

**Name of Fiscal Sponsor:** n/a

**Purpose of Grant:** to provide general support

**Grant Description:** To support the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest, a Washington, DC-based organization that protects and improves the ability of nonprofits to engage in lobbying and other forms of advocacy. The Center does this through reports, media, trainings for nonprofits, advocacy, and strategic partnerships with organizations such as the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and OSI-DC. This recommendation advances a Democracy and Power Fund goal to enhance the ability of nonprofit organizations to conduct more effective advocacy on multiple open society priorities.

**Previous OSI Support:** \$100,000  
\$100,000 from Democracy and Power Fund (2009-10)

**Organization Budget:** \$303,400

**Project Budget:** n/a

**Major Sources of Support:**

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Rockefeller Brothers Fund | \$80,000 |
| George Gund Foundation    | \$70,000 |
| Public Welfare Foundation | \$55,000 |
| Carnegie Corporation      | \$40,000 |
| Ottinger Foundation       | \$20,000 |

**Amount Requested:** \$50,000 over one year

**Is this a contingent grant?** No

**Amount Recommended:** \$100,000 (T1: 21114)

**Term:** 2 years, beginning October 1, 2011

**Matching Requirements:** n/a

## **Description of Organization:**

The Washington D.C.-based Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest (the Center) works to protect and improve the ability of nonprofits to engage in lobbying and other forms of advocacy. Through reports, media, and workshops, the Center educates and mobilizes nonprofit leaders with the goal of dramatically increasing nonprofit advocacy from its current levels. Founded more than ten years ago as a project of Independent Sector, the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest's focus is to "make nonprofit advocacy an ordinary, rather than extraordinary part of what nonprofit leaders and organizations do."

The Center has trained and supported over 1,000 organizations and foundations and several thousand nonprofit leaders to build their advocacy capacity and impact. It aims to motivate organizations to engage in sustained advocacy and to institutionalize effective advocacy within organizations and the nonprofit sector. The Center's training focus is at the state and local level. Through its network of experienced state-based trainers, it provides local, customized training and support in different regions of the country. In developing this on-the-ground capacity, the Center seeks to bridge the divide that exists between advocacy and direct service organizations that may be more cautious about entering the advocacy world.

Through accessible reports, public education collaboration projects, media and workshops, the Center works to promote nonprofit advocacy as something that foundations and charities should do on a routine basis. The Center has jointly developed and released several reports advancing public-interest lobbying and advocacy and led a broad coalition of nonprofit leaders in developing and releasing a report and benchmarking chart for funders and charities entitled *Smart and Ethical Principles and Practices for Public Interest Lobbying*. The Center's President, Larry Ottinger, has co-written an opinion piece for *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* explaining the distinct nature and importance of public-interest lobbying to advance positive social change.

In order to institutionalize training and support, the Center has developed strategic partnerships with major national organizations that have a large number of state and local affiliates. Examples of these strategic partners include the Alliance for Children and Families and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

The Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest conducts its work through these activities:

1. *Strengthening Nonprofit Advocacy and Lobbying Rights*: the Center is leading efforts to update and simplify the Internal Revenue Service's charitable lobbying rules and to stave off threats to nonprofit advocacy in the aftermath of *Citizens United v. FEC*. More specifically, it aims to advocate for improved IRS rules by eliminating the current confusing and unnecessary distinction between grassroots and direct lobbying which disfavors grassroots lobbying.
2. *State-based training and coaching*: The Center's fellows – experienced, state-based policy advocates and educators – have trained several thousand public charity and foundation leaders on developing and implementing public-interest advocacy plans and

structures. It often works with service providers at the state and local levels and has expanded its state-based training and coaching program with four additional fellows from Colorado, Delaware, Massachusetts and Louisiana. Erin Skene-Pratt, a nonprofit advocacy leader from Michigan, continues to oversee the training and coaching and the fellows program, now at 13 total fellows.

3. *Promoting Nonprofit Advocacy and Lobbying*: Through articles, reports, toolkits, and convenings, the Center serves as an important voice and network for public-interest advocacy and advocates within the sector and society.

Following a recommendation from U.S. Programs staff, in 2009-10, the Center developed a partnership with Steve Rickard and OSI-DC to lead a wide range of organizations to seek clarifications and improvements to President Obama's Executive Order on ethics and lobbying. The coalition has taken the position that the Executive Order's presumptive employment restrictions against all federally registered lobbyists is causing unintended harms to public-interest lobbyists that can be remedied in a way that advances the fundamental purposes of an accountable, responsive democracy.

The Center has also partnered with the Brennan Center for Justice to remove restrictions that were placed on the Legal Services Corporation funding to nonprofits that serve the poor in 1996. Civil legal aid lawyers receiving Legal Services Corporation funds have been prohibited, among other things, from using their own private and local funds to lobby for policy changes, to bring class action lawsuits, or to represent certain immigrants.

### **Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought:**

The proposal seeks general support.

### **Rationale for Recommendation:**

U.S. Programs, via the Democracy and Power Fund, recommends a renewal grant of \$100,000 over two years to the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest in recognition of its work to expand and strengthen the impact of nonprofits that conduct advocacy and lobbying to advance open society priorities.

Given the current economic crisis and challenging policymaking climate, there is both a great need and a great opportunity for fundamental change within the nonprofit sector. The Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest aims to seize this opportunity to move nonprofits and philanthropy boldly and decisively to a new, more engaged commitment to advocacy. Many organization already have robust advocacy programs, some know the important rules that dictate what they can and cannot do, and others – especially those in the direct service sector – have an important voice to add to policy advocacy but often choose not to engage in advocacy. It is these organizations that the Center will target in its training.

The budget crises at all levels of government heighten the importance of nonprofits being “at the table” for critical public policy decisions. Nonprofits can fight each other over pieces of a

shrinking pie or, together, can organize around a shared vision and tax, budget, and regulatory policies that advance a just, civil society. Despite the Center's good work to train organizational leaders, the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. FEC* raises fundamental questions about our democracy. Increasing civic participation by those traditionally left out of the back rooms and halls of power is critical to revitalizing an effective and accountable democratic process.

Given these factors, the Center is moving to revisit the rules, culture, and practices holding back too many nonprofits and their constituents from fully and effectively serving as critical voices in today's policy debates. As an important complement to the Alliance for Justice, the Center provides training and coaching for charities and foundations at the state and local levels, including identifying and supporting state-based trainers via its fellows program.

The Center is also well positioned to articulate and advocate for improved IRS rules because of its connections to various federal agencies. Notably, it has two former senior IRS officials on its board of directors, including Marc Owens, a former chief of the IRS's tax-exempt organizations division, and Howard Schoenfeld, a former senior IRS policy officer on tax-exempt organization issues.

In addition to its board, the Center's success is due in large part to its president, Larry Ottinger. Ottinger is a thought partner to U.S. Programs staff and has drawn favorable reviews from Steve Rickard following the partnership between the Center and OSI-DC. Ottinger previously served as the director of policy and leadership development at the Fannie Mae Foundation, where he promoted innovation in affordable housing policy. Prior to that, he spent over ten years as a civil rights and First Amendment lawyer. A son of a former Member of Congress, Ottinger also serves as the co-chair of the Ottinger Foundation, his family's philanthropic institution.

Through its strategic and thoughtful work to address outdated or misguided rules about nonprofit advocacy and to provide training to a large number of advocacy organizations and assistance to those seeking to conduct advocacy, the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest is well-positioned to improve the impact of USP's grantees that are seeking to leverage change. We are pleased to offer this recommendation.



**Grant ID:** 20033982

**Legal Name of Organization:** Progressive Legislative Analysis Network  
dba Progressive States Network

**Tax Status:** 501(c)(3) public charity

**Name of Fiscal Sponsor:** n/a

**Purpose of Grant:** to provide general support

**Grant Description:** To support the Progressive States Network, a multi-issue idea generation and advocacy intermediary based in New York City. The network provides support to over 1,000 state legislators in all fifty states via background research, strategic communications, messaging expertise, and model legislative language on immigration reform, workers' rights, health care, and fiscal policy. This recommendation advances the strategic goals of the Democracy and Power Fund through idea generation and the advancement of open society policy priorities at the state level.

**Previous OSI Support:** \$1,100,000  
\$800,000 from Progressive Infrastructure Grants (2006)  
\$300,000 from Democracy and Power Fund (2009)

**Organization Budget:** \$1,621,000.00

**Project Budget:** n/a

**Major Sources of Support:**

|                            |           |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Ford Foundation            | \$362,500 |
| Public Welfare             | \$200,000 |
| Stoneman Family Foundation | \$ 75,000 |
| Hagedorn Foundation        | \$ 75,000 |
| Public Welfare             | \$ 50,000 |

**Amount Requested:** \$300,000

**Is this a contingent grant?** No

**Amount Recommended:** \$300,000 (T1: 21114)

**Term:** 2 years, beginning January 1, 2012

**Matching Requirements:** n/a

**Description of Organization:**

The Progressive States Network is a non-partisan research and analysis organization that works to build a cohesive nationwide network of advocates and legislators committed to advancing a more just and equitable society. Founded in 2005, Progressive States Network grounds its work in values that can align legislators, advocates, and voters with a vision that encompasses a responsive government that is accountable to its constituents as well as to social justice.

Progressive States Network connects state legislators with a broader national network of advocates, providing lawmakers in states with peer and strategic legislative support to expand their understanding of key policy and social issues and promote their deeper engagement with these issues. The organization works with a base of 1,000 legislators and hundreds of advocates in all fifty states and expands its reach through communications platforms that connect more than 8,000 elected leaders and opinion shapers. The core of its operation consists of a small staff of experts on immigration, health care, economic policy, and fiscal policy issues. It also convenes strategic task forces, each comprised of forty to eighty legislators, that focus on these issues.

The Network's state-based immigration reform efforts seek to craft and highlight policies at the state level that expand opportunity for all residents – both immigrant and native-born – and focus on developing common-sense state approaches to immigration policy. Specific policy priorities include: wage enforcement and workers' rights legislation to protect immigrant communities; community policing legislation that ensure law enforcement officers focus on protecting communities rather than enforcing federal immigration laws; immigrant integration through state tuition equity policies; and support for immigrant small business entrepreneurs. Through this work, Progressive States Network engages a broad range of strategic partners, including a number of national Open Society Foundations grantees. Its immigration reform legislative task force has 82 legislators from 36 states.

The Network's workers' rights program supports basic labor standards and other policies to improve economic security and opportunity for workers and their families and to provide a strong foundation for an equitable, stable economy. Specific components of this agenda include: paid sick days and paid family leave; restoring the minimum wage; and cracking down on wage theft and payroll fraud.

In a time of devastating state budget crises, the Network's fiscal policy work promotes accountability in the state budget process and advances progressive revenue options to support public structures, invest in communities, protect the economic security of working families and the middle class, and set a viable foundation for recovery and growth. This also includes work to identify and disseminate model policy language on: corporate accountability; challenging misguided privatization schemes; promoting progressivity in state tax structures; and proactive economic development policies.

In response to the harsh social and economic realities facing Americans across the country, Progressive States Network is providing policy support to legislators to enable them to effectively address the unrelenting economic downturn and its impact on working families. As a result, the Network developed the 2010 *Blueprint for Economic Security*, offering policymakers and advocates a multi-issue narrative, up-to-date research on key state-based issues, effective messaging tools, and strategies to advance policies that build economic security for families, communities and states as a whole. It will publish the second *Blueprint* this fall at its national Legislative Leadership Retreat, to be attended by 75 of the Network's most influential and effective legislative members. It will ensure that the 2012 *Blueprint* will resonate with self-identified progressive leaders and partners as well as lawmakers and state-based advocates who support practical, common-sense policies to ensure the quality of life and economic security of families and individuals in their states. The Network sees *The Blueprint* as a critical tool to build a shared policy and messaging narrative through the end of 2012.

While not an OSF priority issue, except in advancing drug addiction treatment options, the Network conducts extensive work on health care policy, including implementing and leveraging the Affordable Care Act through strong state level policies that provide reforms for quality, affordable and accessible health care coverage for all Americans. Other issues the Network works on include investing in community-based broadband, election administration, and advancing a green economy.

Progressive States Network's communication platforms include its weekly *Stateside Dispatch* email digest of news and analysis of state policy, reaching 8,000 state legislators, legislative staff, advocates, reporters, and online activists. The *Dispatch* highlights trends and best practices across states on a wide variety of issues and includes case studies of successful campaigns and initiatives and effective messaging and research by key allies. The *Dispatch* also tracks the actions of a variety of groups promoting corporate interests and attacking middle-class and working families in the states.

This year, the Network implemented upgrades to its website to include hundreds of individual policy pieces from its *Stateside Dispatches*, which in turn provide web links to an estimated 5,000 resource organizations, research reports, state laws and bills, and other key resources for elected leaders. Legislators and advocates may now log in to the website with their Facebook accounts to comment on articles, making it easier for readers to quickly find additional resources related to a given issue.

The Network also educates and engages legislators on specific issues through in-depth policy and messaging trainings. At its 2010 Legislative Leadership Retreat, the Network organized and hosted an immigration policy training to educate and engage state legislators on immigration in the wake of the passage of Arizona's anti-immigrant law, SB1070. The extensive, in-depth training was developed with key partner organizations working on state immigration policy and was particularly focused on informing legislators on trends in state immigration proposals, and on engaging them on "best practice" approaches to immigration policy. The training provided state legislators and advocates with the messaging and strategies they needed in order to advance practical, progressive state immigration legislation and participants developed a narrative for how these policies could serve as a potent counter weight to anti-immigrant extremism. An

example is taking tuition equity issues, at the federal level called the DREAM Act but at the state level more commonly referred to as tuition equity, and reframing as a workforce development issue through making the case that enhancing college access for immigrant youth will stimulate much needed future economic innovation and growth.

Progressive States Network's outreach to traditional media resulted in a story on the policies being promoted by its immigration reform legislative caucus in the *Washington Post*, as well as stories, op-eds, and letters to the editor on policies being advanced by the network and affiliated legislators in the *New York Times*, *The Hill*, the *Baltimore Sun*, the *Huffington Post*, and other widely-read outlets. Recently published pieces using the Network's staff as a source for stories have appeared in *Politico*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Nation*.

### **Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought:**

The proposal seeks general support.

### **Rationale for Recommendation:**

U.S. Programs, via the Democracy and Power Fund, recommends a grant of \$300,000 to the Progressive States Network over two years in recognition of its work to generate ideas, analyze policies, build alliances of advocates and state legislators, and catalyze more effective state level advocacy on a range of open society priorities.

To continue to advance its core mission, the Network's ongoing work includes: a) advancing a shared multi-state narrative of positive change; b) continuing to strengthen and expand its role as a "first stop" resource for state legislators seeking information, strategies, and analysis; and c) building strong multi-state legislative networks committed to implementing common sense policies. Democracy and Power Fund staff believe that this work is increasingly important given the policy gridlock at the federal level. Despite a less than pleasant policymaking environment in many states as well, the federal gridlock provides an enhanced opportunity for states to continue to serve as laboratories of change.

Since 2006, U.S. Programs staff have supported the Progressive States Network and are generally pleased with its trajectory despite a few bumps along the way. With the demise in 2007 of the Center for Policy Alternatives – a national organization that provided state legislative research, analysis, and model policy generation and dissemination – the Network fills a unique niche. It is a low budget, scrappy, more narrowly focused, and progressive version of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), the very effective conservative state legislative resource center that has shaped state legislators for many years. While Progressive States Network aspires to have ALEC-like impact on a shoestring budget, it is much more limited in its budget, capacity, and impact. Nonetheless, there is no similar organization that is dedicated to serving state legislators who identify as progressive and to connecting them to the advocates who can build critical support to advance good public policy.

The Network has emerged from a very bumpy 2010, with a fractious executive director transition, and has strengthened its board, primarily composed of state legislators. It has brought

on a new executive director who appears to be off to a good start. Its funding appears to have stabilized, with significant support provided by the Ford Foundation on workers' rights and immigration reform policies, and its staff is competent and well connected with elected and advocacy leaders.

In conducting due diligence for this recommendation, the Democracy and Power Fund staff reached out to colleagues from OSI-DC and the Equality and Opportunity Fund. Caroline Chambers participated in a recent site visit and was interested to learn about the Network's structure and priorities. Colleagues from the Equality and Opportunity Fund are interested in both immigration reform and workers' rights issues.

Although many state-based and national organizations work with state policy leaders, they do so from different starting points. The Progressive States Network starts with the state policy leaders' point of view and works outward to connect those leaders to essential resources and relationships that they can use to advance a positive vision for the communities they serve. We are pleased to make this recommendation for \$300,000 over two years.

**Grant ID:** 20034231

**Legal Name of Organization:** Arab American Institute Foundation

**Tax Status:** 501(c)(3) public charity

**Name of Fiscal Sponsor:** n/a

**Purpose of Grant:** to provide general support

**Grant Description:** To support the Arab American Institute Foundation for its work to conduct research, educational outreach, coalition building, leadership development, voter participation, and heritage programs to promote understanding of, and equality for, the Arab American community. The Arab American Institute promote full engagement by Arab Americans in civic opportunities at the local, state, and national levels and conducts innovative program work, such as its Yalla Vote (“Let’s Go Vote”) civic engagement program. This grant advances the goals of the Democracy and Power Fund to expand civic engagement, including nonpartisan voter participation, from marginalized constituencies and advances the National Security and Human Rights Campaigns’ priorities of building the capacity of Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (AMEMSA) organizations to fight abusive national security policies that are disproportionately directed at them.

**Previous OSI Support:** \$550,000  
\$150,000 from U.S.P. General (2002-2004)  
\$100,000 from Justice Fund (2005-2006)  
\$75,000 from Progressive Infrastructure (2008)  
\$75,000 from Democracy and Power Fund (2009)

**Organization Budget:** \$703,060

**Project Budget:** n/a

**Major Sources of Support:**

|                    |           |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Ford Foundation    | \$100,000 |
| Four Freedoms Fund | \$100,000 |
| Proteus Fund       | \$ 75,000 |
| Saudi Aramco       | \$ 75,000 |

**Amount Requested:** \$350,000 over one year

**Is this a contingent grant?** No

**Amount Recommended:** \$350,000 (\$150,000 from Democracy and Power Fund T1:21113 and \$200,000 from the National Security and Human Rights Campaign T1:21132)

**Term:** 2 years, beginning January 1, 2012

**Matching Requirements:** n/a

**Description of Organization**

The Washington, D.C.-based Arab American Institute Foundation (The Institute) represents the policy and civic interests of Arab Americans throughout the United States and strives to promote Arab American participation in U.S. elections and government service. For nearly 25 years, the Institute has served as the only national, secular, pan-ethnic organization dedicated to advancing the integration, civic education, and political participation of Americans of Arab descent.

The Arab American Institute’s goal is to provide Arab Americans with the resources, training, networks, and access necessary to fully engage in American civic life. It focuses on two areas: civic engagement and policy formation and research and serves as a central resource to government officials, the media, and political leaders, and as a critical hub for information about public policy issues and activities of concern to Arab Americans and to U.S.-Arab relations.

In 2007, the Arab American Institute created the Yalla Vote (“Let’s Go Vote”) Coalition, including more than 75 organizations, embracing Muslims and Christians; students and professionals; first- as well as fourth-generation Arab Americans; local and national groups. Yalla Vote has since formed the core of its voter outreach efforts.

The Institute has undertaken a host of programs, including opinion and demographic research, leadership training, and coalition outreach. Much of its work through 2012 will be organized under the umbrella of its “Yalla Change” Program, an effort that outlines foreign and domestic advocacy priorities. The Yalla Change platform’s goals are to:

- Bridge the divide between America and the Arab world;
- Eradicate the use of Islamophobia and anti-Arab/anti-Muslim fear-mongering, particularly by elected leaders; and
- Utilize Arab Americans’ expertise and their insights into the Arab world, and give them a greater role in analysis and decision-making toward the Middle East and North Africa

Through Yalla Change, the Institute seeks to build an advocacy agenda that amplifies Arab American priorities and serves as a mechanism to educate the broader American public.

With 2012 elections just around the corner, the Institute has an opportunity to bring domestic policies and issues like racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination to the forefront of the national debate. There is a chance to beat back the tide of Islamophobia and anti-Arab rhetoric that already has crept into the political debates and to open a broad discussion on these issues, in order to change the policies and programs that disproportionately and detrimentally impact Arab Americans and American Muslims.

In addition to publishing issue briefs and hosting congressional briefings on issues related to Islamophobia and racial profiling, the Institute intends to draft and publish a white paper tracking the history of ethnic and religious discrimination against the Arab American and American Muslim communities since the 1980s through to the current debate about Sharia law. There is no disputing the fact that Arab Americans and American Muslims have experienced an increase in discrimination from government policies and suspicion, and often fear, from their fellow Americans since the tragic attacks of 9/11. Indeed, some of the most poisonous rhetoric has been at the hands of public officials or candidates. Today, this post-9/11 discrimination has achieved the status of a label when it targets American Muslims: Islamophobia. This “phenomenon” is not new but is essentially the new politics of exclusion. Picking up where the Center for American Progress’ recent *Fear, Inc.* report left off, the Institute’s white paper will give the necessary context to today’s racial and ethnic profiling to allow its community and allies to effectively combat it.

In addition, the Institute will conduct research and polling on Arab American political attitudes in the run-up to the 2012 elections along with Arab American issue priorities. Prior findings have been disturbing, as when a poll showed that 41 percent of Americans believe that Muslims tend to be religious fanatics and 43% believe that Arabs’ negative view of the United States is because “they hate American values and freedom.” While the information is troubling, it provides an opportunity for the Institute to understand the roots of Islamophobia, and to address the core misperceptions that drive the culture and rhetoric of hate.

The Institute also conducts leadership training, has an internship program, and recruits young people to bring their talents to the Yalla Change and Yalla Vote programs. This work allows it to mobilize in key youth centers, like college campuses, and provide an entry point to the civic engagement continuum for young Arab Americans. The Institute’s campus interns work in the field as well at the Washington, DC national office and prioritize outreach to campus groups to host get out the vote events, town hall meetings, and candidates’ nights that serve the entire Arab American community, not exclusively young people.

### **Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought**

The recommendation is for general support.

### **Rationale for Recommendation**

U.S. Programs, via the Democracy and Power Fund and the National Security and Human Rights Campaign, recommends a \$350,000 grant to the Arab American Institute Foundation over two years in recognition of its work to advance civic engagement and non-partisan voter participation



from the Arab American community across the United States. The recommendation also advances National Security and Human Rights Campaign priorities of building the voice and capacity of Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (AMEMSA) organizations to fight abusive national security policies that are disproportionately directed at these communities in American society; ending racial and religious profiling of AMEMSA individuals and communities; and countering bigotry and promoting acceptance in American society.

Beginning with the January launch of the Arab Spring, many Americans began to identify with a population and region they may have seen as “the other.” Through the courageous actions of those in Egypt, Tunisia, and beyond, Americans watched men and women who had long been negatively stereotyped embrace the concepts of freedom and justice that Americans use to define their own nation. Perhaps for the first time, many realized that Arabs are individuals ‘just like us,’ with the same fears and hopes, goals, and challenges. This is the moment to seize on that realization and to build on that understanding. The Arab American Institute will use this newfound acceptance and empathy to emphasize the injustice of domestic policies and programs that target racial, religious, and ethnic minorities, including their fellow Americans of Arab descent.

A priority of the Democracy and Power Fund is to support efforts to engage critical under-represented constituencies in U.S. society and our non-partisan voter funding priorities place a particular emphasis on inspiring the voter participation of people of color, new citizens, and young people. It is clear that the Arab American Institute Foundation, via its creative Yalla Vote project, understands that fostering civic engagement is essential to ensuring that its constituency develops the capacity to raise its voice on issues of fundamental concern, ranging from immigration policy to civil liberties.

It is also important to note that while many minority communities tend to display rates of voting below the national average, the Arab American community has faced particular challenges to civic and electoral participation over the ten years since the September 11 attacks. Due in large part to the work of the Institute and the Yalla Vote coalition, more Arab Americans registered and voted in 2008 than ever before and the accuracy of the 2010 census count was improved. Yalla Vote is an innovative project that works in a very strategic fashion in the nation’s largest Arab American population centers, utilizing a community- and campus-based model of engagement. The long-term benefits are clear in terms of increasing the political participation of a very marginalized community, elevating issues that may be overlooked or that face deeply entrenched bias, and developing the next generation of leaders for its growing community.

In response to the momentum created by the “Arab Spring” and the historic changes in the Middle East, the Institute also created Yalla Change, a national campaign to increase awareness of the growing threat to civil liberties posed by national security policies, educate Americans about Arab history and culture of the Arab people, and mobilize Arab Americans to play a central role in facilitating change at home and abroad. The Arab American Institute works to end racial, ethnic and religious profiling and discrimination of AMEMSA individuals and communities using a multi-pronged approach of public education, advocacy and outreach to policy makers and the media. During the grant period, it will draft issue briefs, including the aforementioned white paper, and organize grassroots campaigns to disseminate the information

virally and via social networks and media outreach. To boost its rapid response efforts, it plans to develop a speakers' bureau that engages key community leaders and young people to stimulate local action through leadership summits, community and campus events, and town hall meetings on the domestic civil liberties implications of U.S. foreign policy. The Institute will also host briefings on the Hill on such issues as Islamophobic and anti-Sharia law efforts, the impact of the "Arab Spring" at home, and its research and polling data on Arab American political attitudes and concerns.

Arab Americans have a unique and critical role to play in policy discussions regarding domestic and foreign relations. They have a singular understanding of the Arab region and its people and understand, perhaps better than many lawmakers and candidates, the international implications of domestic policies. Those implications cannot be underestimated, and the Institute's polling showed that America's standing in the Arab world is at a lower point in 2011 than it was during the Bush Administration, largely due to disillusionment with what was perceived as a 2009 "regime change" here in the U.S. Not only have our foreign policies gone unchanged with respect to the Arab world, but our treatment of the AMEMSA community within our own borders continues to raise questions about the U.S.' dedication to freedom and equality for all. We are pleased to offer this recommendation.

**Grant ID:** 20034336

**Legal Name of Organization:** Funders' Committee for Civic Participation

**Tax Status:** Other

**Name of Fiscal Sponsor:** Public Interest Projects

**Purpose of Grant:** to support the Funders' Committee for Civic Participation

**Grant Description:** The Funders' Committee for Civic Participation, a philanthropic affinity group, is housed at Public Interest Projects. The Funders' Committee brings together grantmakers committed to enhancing non-partisan democratic involvement in all dimensions of civic life, including elections, governance, media, and civil society, with a particular emphasis on engaging historically disenfranchised and underrepresented communities. Since the 1980s, the Funders' Committee has been a driving force in the donor community, advancing effective voter registration and education, supporting campaign finance reform, and exploring new voting technologies and effective voter engagement strategies. Several U.S. Programs staff participate in leadership roles within the Funders' Committee, including the Democracy and Power Fund on voter registration, education, and mobilization, and the Transparency and Integrity Fund on election administration and money in politics issues.

**Previous OSI Support:** \$3,880,000 (includes several Public Interest Projects sponsored efforts, notably the Four Freedoms Fund)  
\$500,000 from U.S. Programs General (2003-2004)  
\$250,000 from Justice Fund (2005-2006)  
\$850,000 from Immigrants' Rights (2004-2008)  
\$480,000 from Democracy and Power Fund (2008-2011)  
\$1,100,000 from Immigration Innovation (2009-2010)  
\$700,000 from Equality and Opportunity Fund (2010)

**Organization Budget:** \$26,315,874

|   |                     |          |
|---|---------------------|----------|
| <b><u>Project Budget:</u></b>           | \$539,337           |          |
| <b><u>Major Sources of Support:</u></b> | Ford Foundation     | \$50,000 |
|   | Bauman Foundation   | \$40,000 |
|   | Four Freedoms Fund  | \$35,000 |
|   | HKH Foundation      | \$15,000 |
|   | Solidago Foundation | \$10,000 |

**Amount Requested:** \$100,000 over two years

**Is this a contingent grant?** No

**Amount Recommended:** \$100,000

**Term:** 2 years, beginning January 1, 2012

**Matching Requirements:** n/a

**Description of Organization**

Public Interest Projects, based in New York City, is the fiscal agent for the Funders’ Committee for Civic Participation (the Funders’ Committee). Public Interest Projects offers grantmaking, technical assistance, and strategic planning programs for institutional and individual donors interested in social justice and human rights issues. This includes its work to direct and staff the Four Freedoms Fund, Funders' Committee for Civic Participation, Fulfilling the Dream Fund, and the U.S. Human Rights Fund.

**Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought**

Established in 1983, the Funders’ Committee for Civic Participation is a nationally recognized membership-based philanthropic affinity group that connects grantmakers who are active in the field of civic engagement with tools, resources, and programming to inform their goals and funding strategies. It has close to 70 institutional members and dozens of additional philanthropic colleagues who regularly participate in its programming. Increasingly, the Funders’ Committee connects with other affinity groups and funder networks, including the Neighborhood Funders Group, Environmental Grantmakers Association, Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees, and the Women’s Donor Network, by helping them integrate civic engagement activities into their work and philanthropic strategies.

The Funders’ Committee for Civic Participation exists to improve the field of civic engagement funding by providing grantmakers with a stage for showcasing innovative ideas, a forum for strategic dialogue, and a clearinghouse for civic participation research, tools, and news. The organization plays a critical role in civic engagement philanthropy by increasing efficiency and amplifying the impact that funders can have whether they are large national foundations, such as the Ford Foundation, or local- or state-based foundations, such as North Carolina’s Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation. The Funders’ Committee also serves leaders in the philanthropic

community through heightened attention to historically disenfranchised and underrepresented communities. Its members support efforts to engage voters, eliminate structural barriers to voting, advance reforms to improve government and electoral systems, and inspire public involvement in civic life.

The Funders' Committee's programming is informed by its members and implemented by a three-person staff, based in Portland, Oregon, that consists of an executive director, a program associate and an operations coordinator. The staff cultivates the engagement, recruitment, and retention of donor members, coordinates the planning of two national convenings each year, facilitates monthly phone briefings on pressing topics in the civic engagement field (each draws between 35-60 funders), and convenes working groups on money in politics and state civic engagement infrastructure. It works in concert with an active 12-person steering committee that is made up of professionals from the civic engagement grantmaking community. Bill Vandenberg currently represents OSF on its steering committee, and Laleh Ispahani co-chairs the Committee's new money in politics working group. Other U.S. Programs staff from the Democracy and Power, Equality and Opportunity, Strategic Opportunities, and Transparency and Integrity Funds, have participated in Funders' Committee meetings, working groups, and monthly phone briefings.

### **Rationale for Recommendation**

U.S. Programs, via the Democracy and Power Fund, recommends a grant of \$100,000 over two years to the Funders' Committee for Civic Participation in recognition of its work to strengthen the civic engagement field through thought leadership and strategic coordination of a diverse set of foundations.

The Funders' Committee for Civic Participation leads the philanthropic community in its efforts to enhance non-partisan democratic participation. As a long-time supporter, the Open Society Foundations derive significant benefits from its involvement, particularly in the run-up to major election years where information and resources must be gathered and distributed as strategically and early as possible. OSF staff is able to: develop and deepen relationships with other funders at the national and state levels; learn effective strategies to maximize the impacts of our grantmaking; share evaluation tools; and discuss gaps in the field which leading practitioners and donors confront.

The Funders' Committee's twice yearly national convenings each draw 150 funders and field leaders, including USP peers from the Carnegie Corporation, Ford Foundation, and Wellspring Advisors as well as state-based funders from throughout the country. The end of the year convening typically focuses more on national level conversations and challenges, and the spring convening focuses more on local, state, and regional civic engagement challenges. The 2012 spring convening will be held in North Carolina and USP staff expect it will feature the work of a number of our grantees working there and across the Southeast. Topics that have been addressed at recent national meetings include: innovations in technology that enhance community-based voter engagement work; the impacts of the *Citizens United* ruling; attacks on workers and government in Wisconsin and beyond; the state budget crises and how organizations are using civic engagement strategies to increase tax revenue; effective engagement of immigrant

communities; and evaluation methods that enable the most efficient usage of funders' grant dollars.

Over the course of our present two year grant to the Funders' Committee, we were particularly impressed with the Funders' Committee's quick and nimble work to build a high performing working group to maximize the impact of the philanthropic community in the Census 2010. This work led to much more effective work in communities across the nation so that an expected large undercount of people of color, immigrant, student, and formerly incarcerated communities did not materialize. OSF played a leading role in this process, via the Democracy and Power and Strategic Opportunities Funds, and it was a model effort of philanthropic collaboration. It is our expectation that the new money in politics working group will work in a similarly efficient, thoughtful, and high impact fashion as the Census 2010 working group did.

An added benefit of U.S. Programs' staff involvement in broader Funders' Committee activities is that it introduces us to a sizable number of state and local funders that will likely become important thought partners, and potential co-funders, as our city/state process launches over the next year.

The Funders' Committee is cheerfully and capably led by Deb Ross, a long-time Oregon-based activist and advocate who has worked in senior level positions for the Western States Center and Public Campaign. Ross brings a wealth of experience in building effective collaborations (always important in funder affinity groups where perpetual "herding cats" challenges exist), expanding voter participation, and confronting the corrupting role of money in politics. She effectively guides a diverse group of local and national foundations, ensures that the interests of the members are served, and provides regular and helpful updates to the members. It is our pleasure to recommend continued support for the Funders' Committee for Civic Participation.

**Grant ID:** 20033652

**Legal Name of Organization:** Youth Engagement Fund

**Tax Status:** Other

**Name of Fiscal Sponsor:** Tides Center

**Purpose of Grant:** to support the Youth Engagement Fund

**Grant Description:** The Youth Engagement Fund is a Washington, DC-based national, nonpartisan 501(c)(3) collaborative table of youth civic engagement organizations that exists to provide technical assistance and regranting to increase youth voter participation. Participating groups include high impact youth organizations that work within Asian American, Black, Latino, immigrant, low-income, and student communities. This recommendation advances the goals of the Democracy and Power Fund via the Youth Engagement Fund's leadership in increasing the voter participation and civic engagement of young people, particularly from within people of color, immigrant, and low-income communities.

**Previous OSI Support:** \$775,000  
\$775,000 from the Democracy and Power Fund (2009-2011)

**Organization Budget:** \$6,005,387

**Project Budget:** \$1,000,000

**Major Sources of Support:** Democracy Alliance donors \$250,000  
HKH Foundation \$200,000  
Tides Foundation \$100,000

**Amount Requested:** \$150,000 over one year

**Is this a contingent grant?** No

**Amount Recommended:** \$300,000

**Term:** 9 months, beginning September 1, 2012

**Matching Requirements:** n/a

## **Description of Organization**

Since 1976, the Tides Foundation has worked with donors committed to social change, bringing resources and people together towards the goal of strengthening community-based nonprofit organizations and the progressive movement through innovative grant making. Tides Foundation has offices in San Francisco and New York City and is a self-sustaining public charity that makes grants across the country and globe.

## **Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought**

The Youth Engagement Fund, a collaborative effort between individual and institutional Donors, has been the central vehicle for supporting youth civic engagement infrastructure for the past two election cycles. With financial support from Democracy Alliance donors and foundations, the fund has supported tools and products that create economies of scale for the field; has helped leverage access to data, analytics and polling capacity; and has supported online and grassroots activities that build long-term infrastructure in communities.

Youth Engagement Fund goals include:

- Building long-term youth political power;
- Increasing the capacity of youth-focused civic engagement and advocacy organizations;
- Promoting purposeful coordination amongst groups; and
- Increasing and sustaining youth voter registration and turnout.

Since its creation in 2008, the Youth Engagement Fund has enabled coordinated, strategic investments in the youth civic engagement sector, giving the youth sector the stability and investment it needs to be successful. The Fund provides a unique vehicle for both groups and donors. Organizations and leaders in this sector are often marginalized; being young is not always an asset, particularly when soliciting money. Youth-oriented groups often lack sophisticated fundraising strategies or professional fundraising staff. The Fund bridges the gap and provides youth organizations access to new resources within a structured, collaborative fund that allows donors to invest with confidence.

In 2008, the organizations supported by the Youth Engagement Fund registered over 1.7 million young people to vote and turned out many voters through their get out the vote efforts. The Fund invested over \$2 million in the youth sector in 2010, for voter registration, get out the vote, and direct investments in technology and tools (such as the Data Entry Consolidation Center and Catalist subscriptions), online and offline communications work, election protection, polling, research, testing, training, and evaluation.

The YEF seeks to raise \$1 million by the end of 2011 and anticipates that 70-80% will go to development of tools and technology, with the remaining 20-30% being split between early voter registration field work (including collaborative projects) and testing, experiments, polling and research. Exact grant amounts will be determined through the application process. The Fund will complete the first round of grant-making, including disbursement of funds, by January 31, 2012. Expected outcomes and impact include:



### *Tools and Technology:*

The Youth Engagement Fund will award grants to groups (or directly to vendors working with groups) creating or updating online voter registration tools, developing new online engagement vehicles, and creating new voter registration tools that interact with social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The Fund will also work with the Analyst Institute, a network of academics that specialize in voter participation analysis and randomized trials, to develop experiments to test new tools well in advance of the 2012 elections to optimize their impact.

### *Early and Collaborative Voter Registration Field Work:*

The Fund will award grants to groups engaging in early voter registration activities that primarily focus on youth from communities of color and non-college youth. Many youth focused organizations engage in voter registration efforts year-round; due to the transient nature of this demographic, constant work is needed to maintain registrants and register new applicants. The Fund will also award grants to aid collaborative efforts, such as the new “National Voter Registration Day,” an effort on which dozens of groups in the youth voter field are collaborating.

### *Research and Polling*

In 2011, the Fund seeks to further hone message development for the youth sector and will commission public opinion research that will enhance the ability of its partner organizations to inspire and mobilize large numbers of young people to vote. Youth Engagement Fund staff will also compile and analyze public opinion research that has been conducted by others in order to be a research resource for its partner organizations.

The Fund’s 2012 budget and grant-making strategy are not yet finalized but it expects to create multiple categories of grant-making, including: voter registration; get out the vote; testing, experiments, polling, and research; technology and tools; and engagement of under-represented youth, specifically youth of color, LGBTQ, low-income, and non-college youth.

### **Rationale for Recommendation**

U.S. Programs, via the Democracy and Power Fund, recommends a grant of \$300,000 over nine months to the Youth Engagement Fund in recognition of its work to provide coordination, technical assistance, and funding to youth voter organizations. This support, provided with rigorous evaluation and analysis of what strategies work, catalyzes large scale youth voter participation.

Commonly called the Millennial Generation, young people born between the late 1970s and mid-1990s rival the Baby Boomers in size and are the most diverse generation in history. The Millennial generation is nearly 80 million strong and will be 25% of the voting age population in 2012. Over 35% of Millennials identify as non-white and 20% report being an immigrant or the child of an immigrant. The vast majority of young people are not in college, with only 25% of 18-24 year-olds attending a four-year college full time and 57% having any college education.

The size and diversity of the generation provides it with a clear path to future power and an impact in elections that was already demonstrated in 2008. This size and diversity also bring complexity, with multiple constituencies requiring multiple messages, as well as a high level of

transience, with the average young person moving seven times between the ages of 18 and 30. Additionally, the challenge of inspiring voter participation from non-college youth remains, with non-students voting at a rate that is nine percentage points lower than those in college.

The 2008 election saw record levels of young voter registration and turnout with over 23 million young people voting. This constituted 53% of those eligible, a 5% increase over 2004 numbers. For the first time, the youth vote share of overall turnout (18%) surpassed the senior vote (16%). In 2010, young voter turnout was 24% of those eligible to vote, comparable to previous midterm election years but only 11% of overall turnout. Young African American and Asian turnout percentages increased over the 2006 midterm election.

Despite the increased youth voter turnout, getting Millennials to vote does not in itself advance open society. When young people do not vote in large numbers, however, we know that the electorate is then older, whiter, wealthier, and less friendly to open society positions. According to most public opinion research, the majority of Millennials, even conservatively identified ones, have opinions on racial justice, criminal justice, marriage equality, climate change, and foreign policy that track closely to OSI priorities. It is because of our concern with the potential youth drop off vote, along with the reality that our peer funders are unlikely to get their funding to the field early in this election cycle, that we are recommending an additional \$150,000 in this grant beyond the \$150,000 that we had originally projected and that the Youth Engagement Fund requested.

Based on our due diligence of the Fund's plans for 2011 and 2012, we believe that it is well-positioned to address the youth vote drop-off, support the registration of several hundred thousand new voters, and build on its prior success in increasing collaboration among its members. It has competent leadership, thoughtfully engages a broad variety of leading youth organizations, has a culture of experimentation and evaluation, has demonstrated results in previous elections, and is supported by a board of experienced advisors, including funders, political strategists, and youth field experts. As a long-time leader in supporting youth engagement, OSI is represented on the board by Democracy and Power Fund Program Director, Bill Vandenberg. Day to day management of the grantmaking relationship has been handled by a Democracy and Power Fund program officer and Vandenberg serves in a strategic role for the Youth Engagement Fund, assisting it in identifying new resources to support its work.