

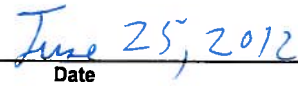
U.S. PROGRAMS
Board Special Grants
Summary of Recommended Grants
Out of Docket - June 25, 2012

U.S. Programs, Board Special Grants

Organization	Grant Code	Recommended	Term	2012	2013
Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute	T1: 21105	Up to \$800,000	1 year	\$800,000	
Total Recommended:		Up to \$800,000		\$800,000	
GRANTMAKING TOTAL THIS DOCKET:		Up to \$800,000		\$800,000	



Approval Signature



Date

Grant ID: 20036854

Legal Name of Organization: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute

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

Name of Fiscal Sponsor: n/a

Purpose of Grant: to support the Economy War Room Project, a strategic alliance that will provide rapid response communications and mainstream media placement on progressive economic perspectives.

Grant Description: To support an US Programs Board initiated grant to launch the Economy War Room Project, housed at the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute. The Economy War Room Project will coordinate the activities of a strategic alliance of economic policy, communications, and public opinion research groups. The alliance will provide rapid response communications, public opinion research, and mainstream media outreach and placement to advance progressive economic perspectives.

Previous OSI Support: \$1,519,200
\$25,000 from Chairman’s Fund (1997)
\$100,000 from Progressive Infrastructure (2007)
\$300,000 from Seize the Day Fund (2009)
\$1,094,200 from Democracy and Power Fund (2009-11)

Organization Budget: \$4.800,000

Project Budget: \$1,703,400

Major Sources of Support: Steve Bing \$250,000
Stan Greenberg \$250,000 (in-kind)

Amount requested: \$850,000

Is this a contingent grant? No

Amount Recommended: Up to \$800,000 (T: 21105)

Term: 1 year, beginning June 1, 2012

Matching Requirements:

Matching funding, albeit with no specific formula, was recommended at US Programs' October 5-6, 2011 Board meeting.

Description of Organization:

The Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute is a New York-based nonprofit that develops paradigm shifting economic policy. Since its formation, the Institute has been devoted to sharing the ideals and achievements of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt with new generations. Through programs, events, and publications, the Institute seeks to make lessons of the past relevant for understanding today's challenges, including protecting and expanding upon the successes of New Deal programs, such as Social Security and the Fair Labor Standards Act. The Institute advances its work by integrating elite and grassroots strategies, including idea generation that is facilitated by noted economic experts such as Nobel winner Joseph Stiglitz, and its student-led network of campus think tanks that connect student ideas and activism to the political process.

The Roosevelt Institute's Economic Policy Project is a multi-platform, interdisciplinary effort that engages established and new thinkers, organizers, advocates, media, and policy makers. In early 2009, the Institute launched the Four Freedoms Center, a think tank for the development and promotion of rigorous, progressive policy ideas and value narratives. Roosevelt's focus is around the many issues that relate to building a broad-based and sustainable economic future for the people of the United States. The organization's economic policy work is grounded in the recognition that the current global financial crisis reflects years of unfettered deregulation, growth of undemocratic institutions, and rising economic inequality alongside a decline in economic mobility. Roosevelt seeks to address the lack of prominent new economic models by facilitating the development and advancement of new economic paradigms that prize fairness and equity, along with the increased engagement of more Americans. Through these paradigms, it also seeks to rebuild confidence that government can play a constructive role in regulating markets and society.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought:

The Roosevelt Institute will serve as a convener for the Economy War Room Project, a collaboration among a number of different economic policy, media, grassroots, online, and research organizations that, together, seek to better promote the kinds of economic ideas and policies that grow the economy and make it work for many, not the few. These policies embrace fairness, reasonable regulation, and public investment.

The "War Room" will organize and train economists from several major progressive think tanks that focus on economic issues. It will provide not only media training for the economists but also high level mainstream and progressive media placement opportunities. Such opportunities will enable the economists to discuss sound economic policies that are currently absent from regular debate in the mainstream media. In addition to the Roosevelt Institute, the think tanks include the Institute for New Economic

Thinking (INET), Center for American Progress, Center for Economic and Policy Research, Institute for Women's Policy Research, and the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. This effort will also tap the research and media placement expertise of key Washington, DC operators, including Media Matters, Democracy Corps, and Fenton Communications. The War Room Project will be guided by an advisory board of up to five people, with representatives likely coming from the following organizations: Roosevelt Institute, Media Matters, Center for American Progress, Democracy Corps, and Fenton Communications. Andy Stern, an US Programs Board member, will likely serve on the advisory board.

The War Room will:

- Press mainstream media outlets for more balanced economic coverage, with more airtime given to progressive arguments around job creation, inequality, regulation, tax fairness, and public investment.
- Educate journalists, particularly network producers and correspondents, as well as media that targets non-English speakers, to introduce them to progressive economic thinking and the economists themselves. This will enable the War Room to bring fresh content and story ideas to these sources, provide guests for their programs, respond to breaking news events, and allow progressive economists the opportunity to effectively refute conservative economic frames and talking points.
- Create an aligned media strategy that is relevant to changing news cycles, the need to amplify progressive economic voices, including prominent economists, and the tremendous need to bring more public relations firepower to a network of progressive economic projects at leading institutions.

Key organizations would take lead on the War Room's core elements, including:

Media Monitoring. Media Matters will be the news monitoring source for the War Room, tapping into its expertise in monitoring conservative economic attacks.

Message Development and Data. Democracy Corps will be dedicated to the messaging work and will be the "pollster" for the War Room's network of firms and organizations. Democracy Corps' economy project will perform surveys to gauge public support for economic policy proposals, including building an economy "from the middle out," taxing the very wealthy, and investing public resources in a manner that creates more equitable growth.

Pro-Active Narrative Changing. The Center for American Progress will take the lead on critiquing conservative economic messages by generating videos, reports, and analysis that put the real world implications of conservative economic theory – austerity, cutting taxes, deregulation and privatization, and shrinking government – at the center of attention. With over 4.7 million unique visitors reading CAP's publications monthly, this

effort can help frame the debate in the media more accurately, driving compelling story lines about how the economy should work.

Rationale for Recommendation:

The Democracy Fund of U.S. Programs, in response to a Board-initiated proposal, recommends a grant of \$800,000 over one year to the Roosevelt Institute for the Economy War Room Project. This recommendation is in recognition of the need for greater amplification of progressive economic ideas and more effective countering of conservative frames and talking points.

It is no secret that the United States is experiencing the worst economic crisis since the 1930s. Yet the frameworks for public debate and the economic paradigms dominating policy discussions about how to address the crisis are principally those that contributed to the crisis. Many of these ideas have been consistently and effectively promoted by conservatives over the past 40 years, leading to the deregulation of financial markets and permitting unfettered profit for some and rising inequality.

Today, one in five Americans is unemployed or underemployed, a statistic that is even more dramatic for African American, Latino, and young Americans. One in nine families cannot make the minimum payment on its credit cards, one in eight mortgages is in default or foreclosure, and one in eight Americans is on food stamps. More than 120,000 families are filing for bankruptcy every month, and the economic crisis has wiped more than \$5 trillion from pensions and savings, turning family balance sheets upside down and threatening to put ten million homeowners out on the street.

In this context, the Economy War Room Project's plan to push aggressively for wider media presence for progressive economists to share sound policies on what a future economic path for the nation could look like is a worthwhile endeavor. The Roosevelt Institute is a key thought leader in advancing meaningful financial regulatory reform, including supporting a broad-based coalition, Americans for Financial Reform, which has advanced an agenda for reigning in market fundamentalism. Roosevelt's work to reposition thinking on financial regulation occurs through its New Deal blog series "What Caused the Crisis?" The Institute's Four Freedoms Center fellowship program features many of the most prominent thinkers on economic and social policy, including Joseph Stiglitz. The elevated profiles of its fellows, and their outside the Beltway orientation, give Roosevelt unique reach beyond a more typical, Washington, D.C. style think tank.

The Economy War Room's goal – to coordinate the efforts of several progressive economic groups and a cast of high profile and politically connected communications, media, and public opinion firms – is ambitious. It will be reinforced by other efforts in the field. These include a civil rights and labor alliance, including the National Council of La Raza, AFL-CIO, and Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, that is working with Yale professor Jacob Hacker on creating and disseminating an intellectual foundation for a progressive future economy. The Democracy Fund will also, via this Board-initiated process, recommend support for this project, although at a lower funding

level, since its budget is much smaller than the War Room. Another effort features Jared Bernstein, the highly regarded, media-savvy economist who led Vice President Joe Biden's Middle Class Tax Force. Bernstein is now based at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. As a result of USP staff's due diligence and introductions, the leaders of these efforts, which did not know of the others' projects, have begun communicating to identify ways in which to complement one another.

Former Service Employees International Union leader, Anna Burger, has been selected to run the project. Burger is a long-time progressive strategist and advocate and has important relationships with prominent Beltway operatives. The project's leadership also includes Andy Stern and Rob Johnson. Johnson, in particular, will be called upon to engage economists from the Institute for New Economic Thinking network to participate in the project. It is this blend, of the Beltway political strategists and the progressive economists, all working with robust media placement and communications strategy support, that makes the War Room effort a particularly promising concept. Staff believes that the aggressive placement of progressive economists in mainstream media outlets and the messaging, polling, and public discussions that the War Room seeks to utilize, could make an important contribution towards putting economic policy debates back on track.

Staff has inquired about the War Room's ability to secure matching funds and has received a satisfactory initial reply: the project has secured \$500,000 in early matching direct and in-kind support. The project does have a sizable budget of nearly \$1.7 million, and staff has shared referrals for potential funding leads. Staff will closely monitor the War Room's launch, along with its ability to leverage additional funding and build strong working relationships with prominent economists and economic policy think tanks.