

U.S. PROGRAMS
Strategic Opportunities Fund
Summary of Recommended Grants
June 2011


Strategic Opportunities Fund

Organization	Grant Code	Recommended	Term	2011	2012
Research & Development: Art & Culture Advancing Social Change					
Americans for the Arts	T1: 21125	\$ 200,000	2 years	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Maryland Institute College of Art	T1: 21125	\$ 150,000	2 years	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000
National Association of Latino Arts and Culture	T1: 21125	\$ 200,000	2 years	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Total Recommended:		\$ 550,000		\$ 275,000	\$ 275,000

Special Initiatives: Gulf Coast

Code for America ¹	T1: 21107	\$ 75,000	1 year	\$ 75,000	
	T1: 21126	\$ 75,000	1 year	\$ 75,000	
Southern Mutual Help Association, Inc.	T1: 21126	\$ 80,000	1 year	\$ 80,000	
Total Recommended:		\$ 230,000		\$ 230,000	

GRANTMAKING TOTAL THIS DOCKET: \$ 780,000


Approval Signature


Date

¹ This grant of \$150,000 to Code For America is co-funded by the Transparency and Integrity Fund, T1: 21107 (\$75,000), and the Strategic Opportunities Fund, T1: 21126 (\$75,000).

MEMORANDUM

To: Aryeh Neier
From: Erlin Ibreck and Strategic Opportunities Fund staff via Diana Morris
Date: June 16, 2011
Re: Strategic Opportunities Fund
June 27, 2011 Docket Recommendations

We look forward to discussing with you the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) docket recommendations on Monday, June 27, 2011. Our five grant recommendations are attached – they total \$780,000 and include one co-fund with the Transparency and Integrity Fund. Below is a summary of how these grants connect to SOF's priorities.

Research and Development (R & D)

In its primary role of providing discrete R & D capability that prioritizes strategy development in select areas, SOF is currently serving as a learning laboratory for the role that arts and culture play in advancing social change. In this docket we are recommending three grants; one of which is for renewed support for the **Animating Democracy** project. The grant will continue support for the *Arts and Social Change Mapping Initiative*, for which SOF provided initial support in 2009 as one of our first research and development grants related to art and social justice. With this grant Animating Democracy will develop a comprehensive portrait of art and social change practice on an interactive website that builds on their recent report on the funding landscape supporting this work.

Related to Animating Democracy's initiative is a recommendation to support the Art + Justice Mapping Project of **Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA)**, which will identify and connect arts-based practices and practitioners working to advance social justice in Baltimore. By working in collaboration with Animating Democracy and its national mapping initiative MICA's project seeks to participate in and help to shape a national dialogue on the role of art and design in fostering community transformation and change.

We also recommend support for the **National Association of Latino Arts and Culture (NALAC)** which is the nation's only multidisciplinary Latino arts service organization dedicated to building the capacity of the Latino arts and cultural field. Through its programs and advocacy efforts, NALAC serves as a catalyst for community cultural development, positive social change, and the stabilization and sustainability of the Latino arts field.

New Orleans/Louisiana

The Strategic Opportunities Fund has continued to shape discrete and targeted grant-making that advances U.S. Programs engagement in New Orleans and Louisiana. Together with the Transparency and Integrity Fund, we are recommending a grant to **Code for America** to support a team of three fellows working with the City of New Orleans to build a system for coordinating grassroots, municipal, and private efforts to reduce blight in the city through effective collection and dissemination of information about affected properties. This grant advances investment in open government efforts in New Orleans by connecting a national organization with state and local groups to share strategies and technological tools and will serve as a demonstration project that might ultimately inform initiatives in other cities of interest to U.S. Programs.

Finally, we recommend a one year planning grant to support the Southern Mutual Help Association in its efforts to develop a long term plan that responds to the 2010 BP DeepWater Horizon explosion and subsequent oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico and addresses the economic, policy, and mental and physical health needs of rural families and communities whose lives and livelihoods are interdependent with the coastal waters and marshlands.

We look forward to discussing these recommendations with you when we meet. In the meantime, please let us know if there is further information we may provide in advance of the docket meeting.

Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) Docket II – 6/27/11

Grant ID: 20032962

Legal Name of Organization: Americans for the Arts

Tax Status: 501(c)(3)

Name of Fiscal Sponsor: N/A

Purpose of Grant: To provide renewed project support for Americans for the Arts' Animating Democracy program and its *Arts and Social Change Mapping Initiative*.

Grant Description: The grant is recommended as part of a research and development initiative coordinated by the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) to explore the roles that art and culture play in advancing social change. Launched in 1999 as a project of Americans for the Arts, the Animating Democracy program nurtures civic engagement through arts and culture, based on the premise that democracy is animated when an informed public is engaged in the issues affecting people's daily lives. The proposal seeks renewed support for Animating Democracy's work related to its *Arts and Social Change Mapping Initiative*, for which SOF provided initial support in 2009 as one of its first research and development grants related to art and social justice.

Previous OSF Support: \$20,000

Organizational Budget: \$12,373,915

Project Budget: \$456,756

Major Sources of Support:

CrossCurrents Foundation	\$10,000
Nathan Cummings Foundation	\$75,000
Surdna Foundation	\$20,000

Amount Requested: \$200,000 over 2 years

Is this a contingent grant?: No

Amount Recommended: \$200,000 over 2 years

Term: 2 years (October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2013)

Matching Requirements: None

Description of Organization:

With more than 45 years of service, Americans for the Arts (AFTA) seeks to represent local communities and create opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. AFTA's Animating Democracy program nurtures civic engagement through arts and culture, based on the premise that democracy is animated when an informed public is engaged in the issues affecting people's daily lives. Animating Democracy believes that the arts can: contribute unique programs, settings, and creative approaches that reach new and diverse participants; stimulate public dialogue about and engagement with civic issues; and inspire action to make change. It accomplishes its mission through work in five core areas – research, policy, advocacy, professional development, and visibility – and seeks to accomplish three goals: 1) foster an environment in which the arts can thrive and contribute to the creation of more livable communities; 2) generate public and private sector resources for the arts; and 3) build individual appreciation of the value of the arts.

Over the last decade, Animating Democracy has supported a wide range of arts organizations doing compelling civic engagement work, implemented national research, and developed field resources and publications. Through Animating Democracy's work, Americans for the Arts has evolved into a national resource on arts and civic engagement practice and is called upon frequently to serve as program advisor, researcher, and funding and research partner. Today, as the ideals of arts-based civic engagement have gained currency across many sectors, Americans for the Arts and the Animating Democracy staff have invested new energy in demonstrating the public value of arts-based activities to effect social change and in informing the development of policy that advances the role of the arts in civic engagement.

Description of Project

The proposal seeks renewed support for Animating Democracy's work related to its *Arts and Social Change Mapping Initiative*, for which SOF provided initial support in 2009 as one of its first research and development grants related to art and social justice.

Animating Democracy works to inspire, inform, promote, and connect the arts and artistic practice as contributors to economic development, civic engagement, community sustainability, and social change. Guided by the values of equity, access, and inclusion, Animating Democracy maintains that, when artistic practices are intentionally integrated with practices of civic engagement and social activism, artists and cultural tradition-bearers maximize their contributions as catalysts for action. In such situations, the arts and artists:

- Enhance awareness, knowledge, and discourse around critical social issues;
- Clarify social values and confirm or shift attitudes;
- Increase the capacity – skills, resources, and status – of individuals and communities to engage in civic concerns;
- Promote effective participation and action; and
- Improve systems, places, and policies that advance social justice.

Animating Democracy regards policy, structural, and systemic change as appropriate aspirations for arts programs and organizations, especially when efforts are sustained over time and coordinated in strategic partnership with other sectors. At the same time, the arts also make significant contributions to the creation of human, social, and community capital through civic engagement. Animating Democracy is equally interested in promoting the growth of "artistic capital," (the ways in which creative skills contribute to social innovation and activism) and in understanding "artistic effects," (the ways in which

artistic investigation is advanced in work that is intentionally focused on contributing to social and civic change).

Since its inception, Animating Democracy has made significant inroads to strengthen the role of artists and arts organizations in improving and deepening civic dialogue and engagement around important social issues, implementing substantive national action-based research; producing seven publications and numerous articles; developing resources for the field that continue to be used widely; and overall establishing itself as a national resource to practitioners and donors in the arena of arts and civic engagement. Signature accomplishments include a \$6 million four-year Lab through which Animating Democracy provided funding and technical assistance to 35 arts-based civic dialogue projects that addressed a range of issues from racial equity, LGBTQ rights, and economic justice to gentrification and immigration. With the support of the National Endowment for the Arts, in Animating Democracy launched what has become an ongoing series of workshops for local community-based artists and organizers seeking to expand their work at the intersection of arts and civic engagement. Animating Democracy's *Arts & Civic Engagement IMPACT Initiative* has served to advance an understanding of the social impact of arts-based civic engagement and social change work among practitioners, funders, and community stakeholders. This effort produced five case studies; a national working group of evaluation professionals, researchers, and practitioners; and a dynamic online storehouse of arts for social change specific evaluation tools and frameworks that have moved the field forward in critical ways.

Over the past two years, with support from SOF, Animating Democracy's *Arts & Social Change Mapping Initiative* has made important strides in documenting the full spectrum of ways in which arts and culture are being activated to engage and make change, and in rendering this work visible. Key resources generated include a report, *Trend or Tipping Point: Arts & Social Change Grantmaking* and a new web site scheduled to launch in summer 2011 that will enable arts practitioners, community organizers, movement builders, funders, and other stakeholders to find, connect to, and support creative activity that fosters civic engagement and social change. With support from the Open Society Foundations, Animating Democracy seeks to extend its work in this arena by:

- Elevating the visibility of of arts for social change work among the public and policy leaders.
- Fostering evaluation practice by activating practitioners and specialists to build knowledge and improve the efficacy of arts for change.
- Cultivating circles of institutional and individual donors to support arts for change work, and addressing pervasive questions about the impact of this work on communities and around specific social issues.
- Exploring new ways to link local data sets about arts for change work by partnering on a local project being undertaken by the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore.

As it activates its new site – which incorporates resources generated by the *Arts & Social Change Mapping Initiative* as well as a wealth of resources from related initiatives – Animating Democracy is developing a comprehensive portrait of this field of practice, offering a dynamic platform for inquiry and aggregating critical evidence of impact. By connecting artists and arts organizations with advocacy partners and philanthropic supporters, it is strengthening an increasingly effective community of practice at the intersection of art, culture, and social justice.

Rationale for Recommendation

A central function of the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) is to conduct research and development related to new areas of learning that address cross-cutting issues. This grant advances SOF's exploration of the role that art and culture play in advancing social change and builds upon modest prior support for

the work of Animating Democracy. Animating Democracy's work related to art and social justice is distinguished by its breadth and depth. The project has served as a hub for the broadest spectrum of arts-for-change work and as a critical partner to a wide range of practitioners and stakeholders who look to it for its expertise in documenting the work of the field and its impact.

SOF's initial grant to Animating Democracy in 2009 was among the first of our exploratory grants related to art and culture advancing social justice. Our renewed and expanded support will enable Animating Democracy to: increase exponentially the functionality and reach of its website by supporting targeted promotional and field education campaigns; build new interactive features to enhance the appeal of the site as well as encourage meaningful user participation; expand the initial set of arts-for-change project profiles (including snapshots of the work of several SOF grantees) from 200 to 600; curate special collections of profiles that highlight work specific to a social or civic issue, creative discipline, region, or area of practice; expand its directory of funders; and represent the evolving landscape of this work.

The potency of the arts as a catalyst for civic participation and social change is being widely examined by social justice advocates, colleague funders, and arts practitioners. At the same time, all of these stakeholders are seeking to prove how investments in arts-based civic engagement lead to social change. The challenge of measuring social and civic impact remains a pressing concern. With the recent release of the *Trend or Tipping Point* report and a companion funder directory, Animating Democracy is uniquely positioned to support arts practitioners and grantmakers alike in deepening their respective understanding of the value of the arts in advancing social justice.

Animating Democracy is currently pursuing a new collaboration with the Maryland Institute College of Art's (MICA) to map the arts-based social change initiatives that are being created and employed throughout Baltimore. This work will be a local version of the national approach that Animating Democracy has taken to mapping and understanding the impact of arts for social change, and SOF is recommending a separate grant to MICA on this docket. We see these two grants as complementary and are pleased that Animating Democracy and MICA – which has long served as an important colleague organization for OSI-Baltimore – will collaborate in this effort. The pilot collaboration will enable Animating Democracy to refine long-term goals related to data collection and analysis while offering an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of helpful technological and analytical resources.

SOF's support for Animating Democracy extends our collaboration with other grantmakers to include the Nathan Cummings, Surdna, Lambent, and CrossCurrents foundations as partners for this initiative. Our interest from the outset in the art and social justice arena has been to inform the work of grantees across U.S. Programs by identifying fresh approaches to addressing challenges to social justice and threats to open society and to galvanize increased support for this work. Animating Democracy places the highest value on learning from practitioners and related stakeholders. To this end, it connects and collaborates with other organizations, field leaders, and grantmakers in order to draw on their expertise. This approach aligns closely with SOF's commitment to supporting artists and community leaders as catalysts for change.

As a grantee, Animating Democracy has demonstrated impressive abilities to interpret success in relation to arts-for-change practice, documenting the "value added" contribution of the arts in a way that resonates with policy-makers and developing common message points that make a consistent case for support of this work. With extensive experience in the field and access to in-house technology and research expertise, the project is well positioned to undertake the next phases of this work and execute it in an efficient and timely fashion. The Strategic Opportunities Fund is pleased to recommend a grant in the amount of \$200,000 over two years to support Animating Democracy.

Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) Docket II – 6/27/11

Grant ID: 20032922

Legal Name of Organization: Code for America

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

Name of Fiscal Sponsor: N/A

Purpose of Grant: To support a team of three fellows working with the City of New Orleans to build a system to coordinate efforts to reduce blight through effective collection and dissemination of information on affected properties.

Grant Description: This recommended grant would provide project support to Code for America, a non-profit organization that runs a competitive fellowship program pairing city governments with leading talent in the technology sector to collaboratively solve civic problems. The grant would support a team of three fellows working with the City of New Orleans to build a system for coordinating public and private efforts to reduce blight in the city through effective collection and dissemination of information about affected properties. The fellows will help design and build a technical solution for uploading data from many different sources into the city’s 311 system; use community feedback to make the system (and the information it produces) user-friendly; and help train community groups and city workers to use the system. This project will serve as a model for building an open government/open data 311 system for all areas of the city’s work. This grant would advance the Transparency and Integrity Fund’s goals of investing in open government efforts in New Orleans and connecting national grantees with local organizations to share strategies and technological tools to advance open government goals. The grant would advance the Strategic Opportunity Fund’s research and development efforts to explore and support new opportunities for U.S. Programs’ engagement in New Orleans and Louisiana. In this regard, the initiative will serve as a demonstration project that might ultimately inform initiatives in other cities of interest to U.S. Programs.

Previous OSF Support: N/A

Organization Budget: \$3,083,666

Project Budget: \$300,000

Major Sources of Support:

Rockefeller Foundation	\$200,000
Omidyar Network	\$250,000
Knight Foundation	\$250,000

<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$150,000
<u>Is this a contingent grant?:</u>	No
<u>Amount Recommended:</u>	\$150,000 (\$75,000 from the Transparency and Integrity Fund, T1: 21107; and \$75,000 from the Strategic Opportunities Fund, T1: 21126)
<u>Term:</u>	One year (December 1, 2011 to November 30, 2012)
<u>Matching Requirements:</u>	City of New Orleans must provide \$150,000 match to support the fellows' salaries

Description of Organization

Founded in 2009, Code for America (CFA) is a non-profit organization that runs a competitive fellowship program pairing public institutions with leading talent in the technology sector to collaboratively solve civic problems. CFA's work is guided by the belief that open data is the foundation upon which rational and equitable governance and policy making will grow. Using information technology, Code for America fellows work in partnership with municipal governments to increase government openness and efficiency while simultaneously creating new mechanisms for citizen participation in government. Code for America's projects seek to bring more government data into the open and help make it intelligible to government, non-profits, and the public. CFA is based in San Francisco, California. Its current (and first) class of fellows is working in Boston, Philadelphia, and Seattle.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought

Code for America seeks funding to support a team of three fellows working with the City of New Orleans to build a system for coordinating grassroots, grass tops, municipal, and private efforts at reducing blight in the city through effective collection and dissemination of information about affected properties. This system will serve as a model and testing ground for the development of a city-wide 311 system beginning in 2012.¹

The 2010 census counted 47,738 vacant homes, buildings, and lots in New Orleans; a quarter of the city's housing stock. While transitioning into office in 2010, the Landrieu administration undertook a comprehensive assessment of the city's blight strategy and identified a series of critical problems in past approaches. The most notable were the lack of a comprehensive set of data and the lack of coordination among public and private entities. While both the city and community organizations were attempting to deal with blight, one group rarely knew what the other was doing. The CFA project in New Orleans is aimed at helping to alleviate these data and coordination issues.

¹ 311 systems – pioneered in cities such as New York – are centralized telephone and internet-based portals for city residents and businesses to get information, report problems, and request services. A 311 system provides the public with quick and simplified access to all government services, improves city “customer” service, helps agencies improve service delivery and manage complaints and problems, and provides citizens with information about how the city is managing programs and problems.

The CFA project will seek to streamline, coordinate, and modernize processes across agencies and thereby engage residents actively in the rebuilding process. It will then build a system to collect and share data on blighted properties. The fellows will help design and build a technical solution for uploading data from many different sources into the city's 311 system; use community feedback to make the system (and the information it produces) user-friendly; and help train community groups and city workers to use the system. Once ready, this project will serve as a model for building an open government/open data 311 system for all areas of the city's work.

Code for America will select fellows through a competitive process in the summer and fall of 2011 for one-year fellowships beginning in January 2012. Three fellows will be assigned to the New Orleans project. CFA provides a month of training for all its fellows (including those headed to other cities). In their first month in New Orleans, fellows will interview city officials, city employees, and community groups to understand the nature of the problem with current systems and roadblocks to solving the problem. They will then develop a working prototype of the blight information system. After the first month on site, they will return to CFA headquarters to write, test, and improve the blight reporting system through a collaborative process with CFA staff and other fellows. Over the late spring, summer, and fall, the fellows will work intensively with city officials to roll out the program and train city workers to use and refine the programs they have developed, handing off the work by the end of the year.

Rationale for Recommendation

The Transparency and Integrity Fund (TIF) and the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) jointly recommend a grant of \$150,000 over one year. This grant would advance TIF's goals of investing in open government efforts in New Orleans and connecting national grantees with state and local groups to share strategies and technological tools to advance open government goals. The grant would advance SOF's research and development efforts to explore and support new opportunities for U.S. Programs' engagement in New Orleans and Louisiana. In this regard, the initiative will serve as a demonstration project that might ultimately inform initiatives in other cities of interest to U.S. Programs.

In 2009, SOF and TIF began funding work related to open governance and civic participation efforts in New Orleans. This work has developed into the New Orleans Coalition on Open Governance (NOCOG), a coalition of six good government and community organizing groups. Since its creation, NOCOG and its members have worked on a variety of projects to build public support for reforms that make government information more available, increase opportunities for public engagement in policymaking processes, and pressure city government to adopt best practices on openness. Following his election in spring 2010, Mayor Mitch Landrieu promised to adopt open government practices and "data driven" approaches to governing. Some members of NOCOG served on transition team committees, including committees on information technology practices and blight abatement. The project proposed by Code for America and the city grew out of those committee efforts and will help bring open data standards, processes, and practices to the city.

We see this project as a valuable next step in achieving our goals for open government in New Orleans as it will put into practice many of the reforms NOCOG has sought from the outset: greater access to government information, increased opportunities for citizen engagement with city government, and more transparency of government operations. It will also provide valuable new mechanisms for neighborhood civic engagement on an issue of serious concern to many New Orleanians. Groups such as the Neighborhoods Partnership Network (a NOCOG member) will be able to act as an intermediary between the city and community groups to design and implement the blight system, assuring that it is both useable and used.

The CFA New Orleans project developed as a result of the interest and enthusiasm of Denice Ross, the city's GIS manager.² Since joining the administration last year, Ross has worked hard to improve the city's collection and management of data as well as to find ways to bring 21st century open government standards and practices to the city. Prior to joining city government, Ross was Deputy Director of the Greater New Orleans Community Data Center and a participant in NOCOG. In that capacity, Ross connected with the Code for America team and, after joining the city administration, began developing ideas for how she could tap CFA's resources and expertise to help advance the city's goals for open government. The Landrieu administration has made open government a top priority and strongly supports the CFA application.

We are also pleased that this project allows us to leverage public funds. As a condition of the grant, CFA requires the city to pay the salaries of the three fellows (\$50,000 per fellow) while they seek foundation support to fund CFA's training and support costs. We are also working with colleagues at the Ford Foundation (focused on alleviating blight in New Orleans) and the Surdna Foundation (concerned with civic engagement in New Orleans) to find ways that their grantees and ours can be involved in the design and implementation of this program.

² GIS is short for Geographic Information System. A geographic information system integrates hardware, software, and data for capturing, managing, analyzing, and displaying all forms of geographically referenced information. GIS allows us to view, understand, question, interpret, and visualize data in many ways that reveal relationships, patterns, and trends in the form of maps, globes, reports, and charts.

Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) Docket II – 6/27/11

Grant ID: 20032963

Legal Name of Organization: Maryland Institute College of Art

Tax Status: 501(c)(3)

Name of Fiscal Sponsor: N/A

Purpose of Grant: To support the Art + Justice Mapping Project, which will identify and connect arts-based practices and practitioners working to advance social justice in Baltimore.

Grant Description: The grant is recommended as part of a research and development initiative coordinated by the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) to explore the roles that art and culture play in advancing social change. The proposal seeks support for the Art + Justice Mapping Project, which will identify and connect arts-based practices and practitioners working to advance social justice in Baltimore. By working in collaboration with Animating Democracy (a recent SOF grantee, being recommended for renewed support on this docket) and its national *Art and Social Change Mapping Initiative*, the project seeks to participate in and help to shape a national dialogue on the role of art and design in fostering community transformation and change.

Previous OSF Support: Total: \$168,000 (Funding has been from OSI-Baltimore and the Youth Media Program from 1999 to 2002)

Organizational Budget: \$60,281,097

Project Budget: \$229,714 over 2 years

Major Sources of Support:

Goldseker Foundation	\$150,000
Starr Foundation	\$100,000
Nathan Cummings Foundation	\$100,000
Lockhart Vaughn Foundation	\$80,000

Amount Requested: \$150,000 over 2 years

Is this a contingent grant?: No

Amount Recommended: \$150,000 over 2 years

Term: 2 years (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2013)

Matching Requirements: MICA must provide a \$75,000 match in the second year of the grant period

Description of Organization:

Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), located in Baltimore, is the nation's oldest independent and fully accredited degree-granting art college. Its twofold mission is to prepare students for careers in art and design and to serve as an educational and cultural resource. Since its founding in 1826, MICA has served as a regional anchor institution and as a catalyst for change nationally, throughout Baltimore, and within the field. With a current enrollment of 1,633 undergraduate and 214 graduate students from 44 states and 49 countries, the College ranks among the nation's top tier art programs.

MICA is a proven leader locally and among independent colleges of art and design in leveraging the creative, educational, and institutional assets of academia for the greater good. MICA has made it a priority to invest in the creation of innovative programs, both academic and extracurricular, that provide students with opportunities to pursue arts-based approaches to community transformation and change. The College's socially engaged graduate degree programs are unique in the national spectrum and are helping to shape, define and advance arts-based social practice as a discipline and a field. MICA's Master of Arts program in Community Arts and Arts Education was established in 2002 with seed support from OSI-Baltimore in response to demand from both students and faculty for greater engagement with the surrounding community. MICA's new undergraduate Concentration in Sustainability and Social Practice enables students of any major to pursue a course of study that revolves around the notion of art-making as a community engagement strategy. The College's research centers offer further examples of MICA's efforts to expand the roles of artists and designers as innovators applying their skills to real-world issues.

While each of MICA's programs serve distinct purposes, collectively they share a set of common goals: leveraging talent and resources to bring the transformative impact of artistic practice to neighborhoods and community-rooted organizations; building the capacity of these partner organizations so that they are better positioned to achieve their goals; and enriching the learning of the MICA community and its local and national partners.

Description of Project

The proposal seeks support for the Art + Justice Mapping Project, which will identify and connect arts-based practices and practitioners working to advance social justice in Baltimore. By working in collaboration with Animating Democracy (a recent SOF grantee, being recommended for renewed support on this docket) and its national *Art and Social Change Mapping Initiative*, the project seeks to participate in and help to shape a national dialogue on the role of art and design in fostering community transformation.

Like other mid-size, post-industrial cities, Baltimore routinely struggles to overcome the socio-economic challenges that have resulted from decades of disinvestment. Poverty, crime, addiction, underemployment, failing schools, and decaying housing stock have all challenged the fabric of the city's social, political and economic infrastructure. Moving beyond this analysis of deficits, MICA operates from the perspective that the breadth and depth of creative and entrepreneurial talent that exists within Baltimore is unique – particularly talent that is dedicated to community transformation and social change through an equity lens.

MICA annually attracts, educates and trains 2,000 artists and designers from around the country and the globe. Many are specifically drawn to MICA's socially relevant curriculum that takes students out of the classroom and into community. Similarly, OSI-Baltimore's Community Fellowships program has helped to foster a cadre of innovators and thinkers, many of whom identify as socially engaged artists and are MICA graduates. These change-makers are investing in the fabric of the city by working directly with

underserved neighborhoods. Core to this community are grassroots artists who use hip-hop, spoken word, murals and other visual arts, and performance-based arts to engage young people and adults in neighborhoods across the greater community of Baltimore.

Though not yet measured, it is generally understood that the investments being made by these and other members of this broadly defined Baltimore community – from individual artists and grassroots organizers to established cultural institutions and social service agencies looking for innovative new solutions – are making an important difference in the life and the future of this city. MICA sees these investments as formidable assets that are neither fully leveraged nor fully understood. Many artists and organizers are working in isolation and with limited resources. Focus groups and informal conversations with a range of stakeholders confirm a need for concrete data about this body of work. Specifically MICA seeks to understand: Who are these practitioners? Where are they working and with whom? What are their tools? How have they been trained? What are their goals? What is the impact of their work within the communities in which they're engaged? Overall, MICA and its partners want to know what sustains these practitioners in their work and what resources would enable them to work most effectively.

With support from the Open Society Foundations and in partnership with Animating Democracy, MICA proposes to facilitate a community-centered process of data collection and analysis that will enable the city of Baltimore to map, and more fully understand, its own arts-based social justice tools and strategies. The project will be grounded in, and will contribute in-depth data to, a national data collection effort. It will lay the groundwork for the creation of a suite of web-based resources for use by artists, advocates, philanthropists and others who are interested in collaborating across disciplines, geographies and objectives to advance a social justice agenda within the city. For MICA, the project will result in a better understanding of its own programmatic impact and reach and will help to inform the work and priorities of the College going forward. For the local and national communities of artists and organizers working at the intersection of culture and social justice, the project will serve as a model in documenting art-for-change practices and impact. The project will roll out through a set of activities, including:

Identifying Stakeholders

Key to this project is the identification and creation of a racially and geographically diverse board of advisors that can guide the development and implementation of the project. Advisors will include established and grassroots artists and designers from a range of disciplines, social justice advocates, philanthropic partners, data visualization and graphic design experts, and others who can lend critical expertise to the project.

Engaging Community, Enlisting Talent, Ensuring Feasibility

The Project Director will begin a series of informal conversations with community leaders, artists, designers, and advocates throughout Baltimore to clarify the basic assumptions upon which the project is founded, namely the need for: increased data, strong linkages among practitioners, and better tools for articulating the impact of arts-based social justice work.

Data Collection and Dialogue

Using the tools created for this purpose by Animating Democracy, Baltimore-based individuals and organizations will be able to enter “profile” data that describes the work they are doing, the issues they are addressing, the tools they are using, the outcomes they are anticipating, and basic contact information.

Evaluation and Documentation

The project, by its very nature, revolves around documentation. It aims both to capture and to disseminate information regarding nascent and established projects and activities throughout Baltimore that are at the intersection of art, culture and justice. This documentation will be of value to Animating Democracy and its other partners, as well as to the Open Society Foundations as they consider questions of practice,

impact, and grantmaking strategies related to the roles of art and culture advancing social justice within the communities in which they work.

Rationale for Recommendation

A central function of the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) is to conduct research and development related to new areas of learning that address cross-cutting issues. This grant to support the Art + Justice Mapping Project advances SOF's exploration of the role that art and culture play in advancing social change while also providing an opportunity to extend SOF's work in this arena into Baltimore, where we have the advantage of collaborating closely with our OSI-Baltimore colleagues and their network of current and former Community Fellows.

At the same time, the collaboration between MICA and SOF grantee Animating Democracy (a program of Americans for the Arts) marks an important moment as we observe our national and regional grantee-partners grappling with the same sets of questions – indeed, many of the same questions we are asking ourselves. MICA's stated objectives for this project are particularly resonant in view of our own work, and include:

- Gaining insight into the role that place plays in innovating, supporting and sustaining arts-based strategies within a given city (via comparisons of local to national data);
- Increasing understanding of arts-based social justice strategies, both locally and nationally;
- Increasing investment in arts-based social justice initiatives and strategies in Baltimore;
- Enhancing collaboration between arts-based social justice advocates and their allies within Baltimore, across a range of disciplines;
- Increasing access to tools and information that enable practitioners to connect and learn from each other both locally and nationally.

By positioning the Art + Justice Mapping Project within its newly established Office of Community Engagement, MICA will lend considerable capacity to the Project Director and Advisors through access to the College's graduate and undergraduate programs and comprehensive resources. The project will likewise benefit from Animating Democracy's expertise in conceiving and constructing data profiles for arts-for-change work and willingness to serve as an advisor to the Baltimore-based project. As the first phases of the work unfold in Baltimore, Animating Democracy will beta-test its new website and finalize its data collection tool. MICA aims to work in close and frequent contact with Animating Democracy, to ensure that what it is learning in Baltimore adds value to the national work and that Baltimore-specific data collection tools will be both feasible and beneficial.

With support from the Open Society Foundations, MICA and Animating Democracy will jointly investigate the feasibility of constructing a shared online mapping platform. MICA has much to gain by building from Animating Democracy's already significant investments in the development of software, the creation of initial data sets, and the articulation of indicators of social change outcomes. At the same time, Animating Democracy anticipates that its work will be enriched by the comparisons that will be made possible by MICA's in-depth view of one city's unique strategies and approaches.

MICA's Art + Justice Mapping Project is emerging at an ideal time for SOF and the Open Society Foundations as we explore enterprises at the crossroads of local and national efforts by artists, organizers, and culture-bearers whose work is rooted in principles of equity and justice. The Strategic Opportunities Fund is therefore pleased to recommend a project support grant in the amount of \$150,000 over two years to Maryland Institute College of Art.

Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) Docket II – 6/27/11

Grant ID: 20032895

Legal Name of Organization: National Association of Latino Arts and Culture

Tax Status: 501(c)(3)

Name of Fiscal Sponsor: N/A

Purpose of Grant: To provide general support

Grant Description: The grant is recommended as part of a research and development initiative coordinated by the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) to explore the roles that art and culture play in advancing social change. The National Association of Latino Arts and Culture (NALAC) is the nation’s only multidisciplinary Latino arts service organization dedicated to building the capacity of the Latino arts and cultural field. Founded in 1989, NALAC seeks to promote and develop artistic and cultural expression by the diverse Latino populations of the United States and to build the professional capacity of Latino artists and organizations throughout the country. Through its programs and advocacy efforts, NALAC serves as a catalyst for community cultural development, positive social change, and the stabilization and sustainability of the Latino arts field.

Previous OSF Support: N/A

Organizational Budget: \$828,790

Project Budget: N/A

Major Sources of Support:

Ford Foundation	\$250,000
JPMorgan Chase	\$75,000
National Endowment for the Arts	\$45,000

Amount Requested: \$200,000 over 2 years

Is this a contingent grant?: No

Amount Recommended: \$200,000 over 2 years

Term: 2 years (October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2013)

Matching Requirements: None

Description of Organization:

The National Association of Latino Arts and Culture (NALAC) is the nation's only multidisciplinary Latino arts service organization and is dedicated to building the capacity and sustainability of the Latino arts and cultural field. Founded in 1989 with its headquarters in San Antonio, Texas, NALAC seeks to promote and develop artistic and cultural expression by the diverse Latino populations of the United States and to build the professional capacity of Latino artists and organizations throughout the country. Through its programs and advocacy efforts, NALAC serves as a catalyst for community cultural development, positive social change, and the stabilization and sustainability of the Latino arts field.

With values rooted in principles of social justice and cultural equity, NALAC advances the work of Latino artists and community-based arts and cultural organizations by providing resources, skills, and training for emerging and established Latino arts leaders. Additionally, NALAC supports artistic production and the development and sustainability of vibrant and participatory cultural spaces. It believes that cultural identity lends vitality to social participation and informs the ways in which Latino arts organizations serve their communities. Constituents are Latino artists and organizations working in the disciplines of dance, literary arts, media arts and film, music, performance art, theater arts, and visual arts.

NALAC's programs provide opportunities for artistic production and foster the current and next generation leaders who will guide Latino arts and cultural organizations in the next phase of their development. Collectively, these programs and services have helped to develop a national Latino arts and cultural agenda and to foster means of transferring knowledge and building skills across the constituency. The opportunities provided through NALAC's programs afford Latino artists the support, knowledge and space to address complex cultural questions of equity and identity and to respond confidently to issues of shared concern. Core programs include:

Grants Programs, which include the *NALAC Fund for the Arts* and *Transnational Cultural Remittances*. In June 2011, the organization will announce new guidelines for each of these grant programs that reflect discussions with its national peer review panelists and a thorough review of current applicants' disciplines, requests, and locations. NALAC will also inaugurate a third grants program, called *Diverse Art Spaces*, marking the organization's first grants to non-Latino organizations that support exhibitions or performances of Latino art or the commissioning of new work by individual Latino artists or ensembles.

Leadership Institute, which brings together emerging Latino artists and staff from community-based arts and cultural organizations for intensive training in nonprofit arts management and leadership skills. The Leadership Institute has provided training to 175 Latino artists and arts administrators, empowering them to advocate on behalf of their communities. NALAC staff members stay in close contact with Institute alumni and, in Spring 2011, distributed a comprehensive survey addressing curriculum, professional trajectories, and current issues facing the field. Alumni cited the institute as a major factor in their professional success, with more than 80% of the respondents reporting increased leadership responsibilities or professional advancement.

National Conference, held biannually as the only national convening for the field of Latino arts. The conference is designed to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, resources, and strategies, to promote collaboration across generations and disciplines, and to disseminate NALAC's current research. The 2012 conference will be held in Philadelphia, and participants will engage actively in Philadelphia's thriving Latino community. Guided tours, performances, and visits to local arts and cultural attractions are salient parts of the program, and the local host committee boasts a strong lineup of artistic, business, and philanthropic leaders.

National Conversation Series, through which artists, academics, and leaders address issues affecting the Latino arts and cultural community and develop advocacy efforts to strengthen the field. With 2011 events scheduled in San Francisco and Chicago, the series will share research on new demographic shifts and economic conditions and discuss its implications for leadership structures, organizational capacity, and cultural equity in Latino communities.

Regional Arts Training Workshops, bringing together artists and arts practitioners to provide support for emerging Latino communities and to reinforce capacity in established communities. In 2011, these workshops will convene national arts experts in New York and Albuquerque for comprehensive dialogue and professional development trainings.

With this full complement of services and grants programs, NALAC provides critical professional training, leadership development, funding support, networking opportunities, and national exposure for Latino artists and arts professionals across the country. As a whole, NALAC's programs create unique opportunities for artistic collaborations and meaningful alliances across ethnic, geographic, and intergenerational lines.

NALAC supports established Latino communities in places like Texas, Florida, New York City, Chicago, and California, but is equally committed to reaching out to newly established Latino communities and hosting Regional Arts Training Workshops throughout the country. In order to maintain diversity in all its work, NALAC adapts to changing national and regional demographics and field-wide trends and serves a constituency that is increasingly multi-ethnic, multigenerational, and interdisciplinary. The organization's membership includes thousands of Latino artists and more than 750 not-for-profit Latino arts and cultural organizations located in urban and rural communities. Common threads across this constituency include a commitment to social justice and an emphasis on cultural programming that fosters expression for diverse Latino populations. NALAC member organizations include: El Museo del Barrio in New York; Teatro del Pueblo in St. Paul; the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque; Cornerstone Theatre in Los Angeles (a current SOF and EOF grantee); MACLA in San Jose; the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives in Washington, DC; Centro Cultural del Pueblo in Texas; and the Latino Experimental Theater of Chicago.

The organization's consistent outreach efforts to Latino artists, arts professionals, and organizations allow NALAC's leadership to stay closely tuned to the concerns of its constituents nationally and regionally. From this position at the intersection of art, culture, grassroots communities, and national advocacy, the organization plays a critical role in stimulating artistic innovation, promoting the vitality and diversity of cultural expression in established and emerging Latino communities across the nation, strengthening regional support networks, and honoring the breadth and complexity of the Latino cultural experience in the United States.

Description of Project

The proposal seeks general operating support.

Rationale for Recommendation

A central function of the Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) is to conduct research and development related to new areas of learning that address cross-cutting issues. This grant advances SOF's exploration of the role that art and culture play in advancing social change. We seek to raise awareness of the power and potential for art as an activism tool to advance a broad spectrum of social justice concerns and issues of specific interest and relevance to U.S. Programs' priorities.

Latinos in the United States have faced historic and severe under-investment across the social spectrum, particularly in regard to education, professional opportunities, housing, and healthcare. Entrenched racism and persistent segregation have affected Latinos without regard to their specific ethnicity, heritage, or geographic region. As Latino populations expand across the country – made clear by statistics emerging from the 2010 Census – there are significant gaps occurring every day in local networks of support. In addition, current attitudes toward undocumented workers and policies meant to punish illegal immigration complicate the political and social landscape for Latinos in the United States.

As a national association of artists and arts organizations, NALAC supports its constituents by advocating for improved access to capital, training, and institutional support and addresses – directly and with fortitude – the persistent barriers to institutional and financial support faced by Latino artists and culture-bearers. By responding to leadership development and institutional support concerns while building a nationally collaborative Latino arts network, NALAC is stabilizing the field while playing a major role in the revitalization and cultural development of Latino communities throughout the United States. Through this approach, NALAC is able to engage in artistic dialogue, influence notions of identity within various communities, and affect greater social and civic participation.

NALAC's partners include colleague arts advocacy organizations, specifically the few national and regional networks for artists of color such as Alternate ROOTS and First Peoples Fund, both current SOF grantees. NALAC also collaborates with social justice and civil rights organizations including the Transnational Institute for Grassroots Research and Action, *National Day Laborer Organizing Network* (current grantee of the Equality and Opportunity Fund and the Democracy and Power Fund), Southwest Workers Union (recent SOF grantee for their work related to the 2010 Census), and Voto Latino (current SOF and D&P grantee). The organization likewise has close relationships with national Latino advocacy organizations (and USP grantees), the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials.

NALAC envisions a future of equity, sustainable growth, and economic success for all Latinos, and believes this vision can be realized by fostering individual communities while working simultaneously to change national policies. For 22 years, the organization has provided critical advocacy, funding, and training to Latino artists whose work reflects the cultural values of their communities. By supporting master artisans, migrant communities, emerging leaders, and Latino arts and culture generally, NALAC empowers all Latinos to speak for themselves and for their communities through traditional and contemporary art forms. As a national leader in the field of art and culture – and with its focus on the connection between cultural practice and democratic participation – the National Association of Latino Arts and Culture stands to serve as a critical grantee-partner to U.S. Programs in our ongoing exploration of the capacity for art and culture to influence social change and advance issues of open society, particularly as related to racial equity and immigrants' rights.

The Strategic Opportunities Fund is pleased to recommend a grant in the amount of \$200,000 over two years to NALAC for general operating support.

Strategic Opportunities Fund (SOF) Docket II – 6/27/11

Grant ID: 20032817

Legal Name of Organization: Southern Mutual Help Association, Inc.

Tax Status: 501(c)(3)

Name of Fiscal Sponsor: N/A

Purpose of Grant: To provide support for the further development of its response to the BP oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico.

Grant Description: The grant is recommended to further develop Southern Mutual Help Association Inc's (SMHA's) comprehensive response to the BP DeepWater Horizon explosion and subsequent oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. In particular, it will develop a response that addresses the long-term economic, mental and physical health needs of rural families whose lives and livelihoods are interdependent with the coastal waters and marshlands. SMHA's principal activities over the last four decades have addressed the challenges Louisiana rural communities face as the social, political, and environmental landscape of the region has evolved: affordable housing and homeownership; asset creation; disaster recovery; leadership development; civic/public policy engagement and leadership; economic justice for women, low-income families, people of color, and displaced fishers and farmers; organizing diverse coalitions to work together toward common goals; and creating alternative community development institutions.

Previous OSF Support: N/A

Organizational Budget: \$3,321,868

Project Budget: \$217,146

Major Sources of Support:

NeighborWorks America	\$514,325
Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation	\$125,000
LISC	\$75,000
J.P. Morgan Chase	\$25,000
FB Heron	\$25,000
Ford & MacArthur Foundations PRIs	\$3,000,000

Amount Requested: \$80,000 over one year

Is this a contingent grant?: No

Amount Recommended: \$80,000 over one year

Term: One year (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012)

Matching Requirements: None

Description of Organization:

Southern Mutual Help Association, Inc. (SMHA) is a community development corporation that was founded in 1969 to address the oppressive plantation conditions in Louisiana's cane fields. Its mission is to build strong, healthy, and prosperous rural communities by giving voice to the "voiceless" in rural communities while connecting individuals, families and small businesses to affordable capital, financial education, leadership opportunities, and movements that advance change.

SMHA has a long history of implementing broad strategies, engaging unlikely partners, and creating institutions where none existed before. In the late 1960's, SMHA created the first dental and medical clinic in Louisiana for farmworkers, serving 10,000 clients in its first year. Today Teche Action Clinic (operating independently from SMHA) is one of many community medical clinics that bring health care to small cities, towns and remote rural areas. SMHA's principal activities over the last four decades have addressed the challenges Louisiana rural communities face as the social, political, and environmental landscape of the region has evolved and have included: affordable housing and homeownership; asset creation, disaster recovery; leadership development; civic/public policy engagement and leadership; economic justice for women, low-income families, people of color, and displaced fishers and farmers; organizing diverse coalitions to work together toward common goals; and creating alternative community development institutions.

Following the hurricanes of 2005, SMHA brought much needed innovation to rebuilding Louisiana. Rather than focusing on new wind codes and engineering techniques, SMHA seized the opportunity to re-define the recovery and rebuilding process (in contrast to the approach offered by FEMA and state government). Among numerous state and national awards and recognition, SMHA received Independent Sector's Leadership IS Award for exemplary work building leadership, both externally in the community and internally among its board and staff.

Description of Project

SMHA requests a one-year planning grant to support its efforts to further develop a comprehensive response to the 2010 BP DeepWater Horizon explosion and subsequent oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. In particular, it plans to develop a response that addresses the long-term economic, policy, and mental and physical health needs of rural families whose lives and livelihoods are interdependent with the coastal waters and marshlands. It is, for example, concerned that, among the grave injustices being done to coastal residents who have been affected by the oil disaster, is the compensation process implemented by BP which has selected to use government documents as "proof" of a family's or business's "worthiness" to receive compensation under the plan. SMHA believes that a victim should not have to be a "perfect victim" (i.e., with all the federal government/IRS documents in place) in order to be compensated for damages. As any of the families who took a hard economic hit as a result of the oil disaster—including most fisher families—do not keep good paper records, SMHA believes there should be alternate ways of documenting lost income. It hopes to establish legal standing for "imperfect victims" such as the fisher families with whom they work. SMHA is building on its Rural Recovery Response model, its approach in rural areas post Katrina that successfully created new criteria for participation in relief efforts. There, SMHA documented the damages sustained by families using criteria based on community intelligence and a family's capacity and desire to participate in its own alternate recovery.

The overarching goal of SMHA's planning initiative is to create a strategic framework and necessary partnerships that will result in its long-term project goal: a coordinated response that puts the impacted communities and families at "center stage" and transcends the political and economic undercurrents inherent in the recovery plans of the federal government and BP. SMHA has a decades-long track record in this type of transformational work.

The planning grant will therefore support the following objectives and activities:

Objective 1: Complete an initial "lay of the land" analysis

- SMHA will begin collecting data for use in quantifying the full economic impact of the oil disaster on families and communities – including documenting the condition of natural resources (such as oyster beds) that directly impact the economic future of fishers and related businesses that depend on these resources;
- SMHA will "map" the policy environment that is shaping recovery planning processes currently underway; identify and document the policy "gaps" that are disconnecting impacted families and communities from these processes; and identify the policymakers willing to work toward equitable recovery and restitution for impacted families;
- SMHA will begin "credentialing the science" that demonstrates the health impact of the oil and dispersant on fishers and other individuals involved in initial clean-up efforts and on residents of coastal communities who breathe the air, drink the water, and eat the seafood harvested from oil/dispersant-tainted waters and produce grown from impacted soil.

Objective 2: Identify and engage the institutional partners necessary to ensure a comprehensive coordinated response to the oil disaster. SMHA will partner with:

- Academic /medical/technical partners who can lend credence to the economic impacts on families and communities as well as the science behind the health impact already being documented by other community organizations and medical practitioners;

Federal, state, and local policymakers whose constituencies include impacted families and communities;

- Environmental advocacy organizations (including current partner Louisiana Environmental Action Network that can connect their stakeholders to the overall recovery planning effort;
- Media and strategy partners that can help define, refine, and deliver the message of the true impacts of the oil disaster and the policies that need to be addressed. Among the partners with which SMHA has successful working partnerships are the *Huffington Post* and the Center for Rural Strategies (headed by Dee Davis who was a Katrina Media Fellow).

Rationale for Recommendation

This grant builds upon SOF's discrete and targeted grant-making in Louisiana and extends our ability as a national funder to make small planning and capacity-building grants to leading grassroots advocacy organizations. It also builds upon SOF's initial assessment in 2010 of the need for rapid response grant-

making during the early months of the BP oil disaster. At the time we noted concerns about documentation of the disaster, the issues the disaster was surfacing, and the level of transparency exercised by BP and the government about the immediate and expected impacts of the disaster. We observed that a number of grantees were already working on related transparency and government accountability issues. In particular, OMB Watch seized this disaster as an opportunity to begin connecting the dots of regulatory crises (i.e., Toyota vehicle recalls, Massey Energy's Upper Big Branch mine in West Virginia) as well as to advocate for the government to improve regulatory protections affecting public health, safety and the environment.

It is a year since the explosion of the DeepWater Horizon oil rig that leaked 206 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico and there are lingering concerns that its continuing impact on marginalized people and communities in New Orleans and nearby coastal parishes is not being fully documented. SMHA plans to address these concerns by beginning to collect data that can be used to quantify the full economic and health impacts of the oil disaster on families and communities as well as to inform the recovery planning processes currently underway. SMHA is a highly respected and collaborative convening organization in the Gulf Coast region that has worked tirelessly in response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, and Ike, and is now organizing to help Louisiana's fishers, families and communities survive the unprecedented doom they are facing in the wake of the massive BP oil spillage. SMHA has identified the need for a comprehensive approach to the long-term consequences of the crisis caused by the oil disaster. It has grave concerns that BP's focal concern is to mitigate the damage to itself and that there is, therefore, a lack of stringent and objective data collection on the overall impact of the oil seepage on the environment and on people's health. For example, environmental and health advocates are identifying higher levels of toxicity on the ground and in the air than the EPA is releasing. SMHA has been receiving reliable reports from a community physician of emerging health conditions that can be linked to reactions to toxic exposure. It reports that scientific research on the impact of the oil disaster is being conducted by major Louisiana and Texas academic institutions that are funded by BP, which then maintains the right to publish the research. There are therefore concerns that this research will be corrupted. These concerns connect to US Programs' interest in supporting transparency activities that provide data and information to foster equity and enable action. SOF is therefore pleased to recommend a grant of \$80,000 to support SMHA's efforts to document the impacts of the BP oil disaster that are not receiving the attention they warrant.