

Chairman and Board 2011 approved grants or projects

Grantee/Project	2011 Grants	Notes
Planned Parenthood Federation of America (Southern Project)	\$4,345,000	Total from OSF is \$13.4m over 4 years; year 1 is \$345,000 initial Board amount, plus \$4m to accelerate payout and an additional \$2m from SFPA.
Media Matters	\$400,000	Remainder of \$1m grant GS approved in 2010
City University of New York (CUNY) Research Foundation	\$500,000	State fiscal crisis data collection; Ravitch group
Criminal justice reform in California	\$1,500,000	Additional \$500,000 in 2012
American Library Association	\$750,000	Two-year grant on public discourse (2011 and 2012) that accrued in 2011
Non-partisan voter participation: tools/protection	\$2,250,000	Another request will go to the Board in October
Naturalization	\$2,250,000	\$1.75m in 2012
Young Men's Initiative (Bloomberg)	\$1,000,000	Part of project running 3-5 years and funded also through CBMA and CJF
Total 2011 approved:	\$12,995,000	

Additional potential 2011 grants/projects	2011 Grants	Notes
Money in politics fellows	\$900,000	Board Advisors have discussed with staff, and Board will discuss in October; some or all the money could be spent in 2012 if necessary, but approval is needed in 2011
Total 2011 approved plus potential proposals:	\$13,895,000	

Chairman and Board 2012 pending grants or projects

Grantee/Project	2012 Grants	Notes
Planned Parenthood Federation of America (Southern Project)	\$7,055,000	OSF total is \$13.4m over 4 years (this accelerated payment would fully satisfy our commitment)
Naturalization	\$1,750,000	
Drug Policy Alliance	\$600,000	DPA receives \$4m per year from CNDP; GS has committed an additional \$1m per year for 10 years, starting in 2012 (\$400k from c4 sources)
Kaiser awards	\$100,000	GS commitment to replicate Canada awards in the U.S.
California criminal justice reform	\$500,000	
Young Men's Initiative (Bloomberg)	\$2,200,000	
Total 2012 approved:	\$12,205,000	

Additional potential 2012 grants/projects	2012 Grants	Notes
Additional nonpartisan voting-related work	\$9,000,000	Memo from Board Advisors for discussion in October
Total 2012 pending grants or projects:	\$21,205,000	

MEMORANDUM

To: Sherrilyn Ifill, George Soros, and the U.S. Programs Board
From: Deepak Bhargava and Andy Stern
Re: New Thinking on 2012 Election and Beyond

“Registering them (the poor) to vote is like handing out burglary tools to criminals. It is profoundly antisocial and un-American to empower the nonproductive segments of the population to destroy the country.”

Matthew Vadum, from “Registering the Poor to Vote is Un-American,” **American Thinker**, September 1, 2011

This quote, from a conservative activist, is not an isolated perspective. We meet at a time when the combination of major global economic transformation, growing intolerance, and a corrupted political process put our open society values – and the success of many of our initiatives – at stake. It seems highly unlikely, if not impossible, for OSF to achieve its goals, much less maintain the successes it has achieved, without us playing a major role in promoting and funding significant strategic unity, participation, and mobilization, including voter participation, from the constituencies that are most affected by inequality and injustice.

We have carefully considered the feedback and concerns from board members about voter engagement work at our prior two board meetings. We believe that a new approach, specified here, addresses those concerns and aligns well with OSF values and priorities. We are therefore proposing that the OSF Board allocate \$9 million in additional funds to support a 2012 plan with four components:

- 1) Voter engagement that is anchored in *OSF’s priority constituencies*. This requires a focus on African Americans, Latinos, and youth.
- 2) Focusing resources in cities and states where *OSF issue priorities* (immigration, criminal justice, drug policy, fiscal policy) will be on the ballot or featured prominently in public discourse and where the outcome will have lasting implications for the priorities we hold dear.
- 3) *Field testing* newly developed *economic narratives*, and experimenting with more *collaborative models for campaign communications* and amplification for our efforts where appropriate.
- 4) Recognizing that voter registration work should not be a “forever” endeavor, and this is a 2012 decision only, we therefore include in this proposal an allocation of funds to explore a *paradigm shifting campaign that would obviate the need for third party voter registration efforts*. Until such reforms are achieved, however, we have a responsibility to continue to play a significant, but not dominant, role in 2012 voter registration.

We cannot retreat at such a critical time for open society issues. The Ford Foundation is committing an additional \$10 million to voter registration (on top of its \$10 million in previously budgeted funding for 2012). Under our proposal, OSF would comprise 19% of the total expected funding for voter registration and engagement work in 2012, a significant but not disproportionate role.

Executive Summary of Request

Below are the four (4) key components of this one-time recommendation for \$9 million in new 2012 election cycle funding. In making this recommendation, we recognize that this is a key moment in history where open society institutions, constituencies, and priorities are under attack, and our adversaries are doubling down. We also recognize that the cycle of OSF and philanthropic voter registration funding needs to be reduced over time. We believe, however, that it is irresponsible for us to now pull out of a field where our investments in the participation of the most marginalized are vital (we are one of few funders with that specific focus) without a “big idea” that ensures that voter participation will return to 2008 levels in the 2012 cycle, and then a new framework will arise in the future. In addition, 2012 is a perfect laboratory to test some economic approaches and to address communication gaps that have been discussed by the OSF Board. This recommendation addresses these short-term realities as well as the need to shift our approach in the future.

I. Win Pre-Determined Substantive Changes in Open Society Priorities that will be Resolved in 2012 City and State Elections (\$3.5 million recommendation).

Focus narrowly on key places such as California, Maryland, Ohio, and Wisconsin where open society campaigns are already underway and where our investment can bolster the likelihood of an electorate that is more receptive to current and future open society priorities. Legally, we cannot direct voter registration in fewer than five states. With recent political attacks on: 1) voter access, including onerous new voter identification laws in several states; 2) immigrants, such as the attempt to repeal Maryland’s new state DREAM Act for immigrant students; and 3) public employees, such as the high profile attacks in Ohio and Wisconsin, there are a number of cities and states where OSF investment could make a great impact. There are also some potential proactive efforts in the works to advance drug policy reform that may emerge, perhaps in California or Colorado, and to expand public investment and increase tax revenue, such as in Colorado.

This is *not*, both legally and philosophically, about candidates or parties. This is about shifting American demographics, which communities are heard – or not – in our democracy and what it takes to ensure that open society issues advance. This is also about the importance of creating a long-term independent political force that can hold elected leaders of all parties accountable to open society values and priorities both before and after Election Day. This would also complement our ongoing city/state research process by identifying where major open society priorities are most resonant – or challenged – and where our future advocacy campaign investments would be most effective.

II. Voter Registration and Engagement: For 2012, Focus Narrowly on OSF Priority Constituencies (\$2.75 million recommendation). (Our specific goal should be to have 2012

voter participation rates from the Rising American Electorate – principally people of color and youth constituencies – meet 2008 levels or, preferably, comprise the appropriate share of the adult citizen population. With the state of the economy and current lack of enthusiasm about the 2012 election this is an ambitious goal.)

Through a narrow focus on historically less active voters, OSF funding can, with high levels of voter participation, contribute to a larger constituency for open society advocacy priorities. We recommend that all new voter engagement funding be narrowly focused on raising the participation of Black, Latino, and youth constituencies that are key to the advancement of the Campaign for Black Male Achievement, immigrants’ rights, and other open society interests. New national efforts are currently underway to establish collaboratives of funders and groups working to maximize Black, Latino, and youth voter turnout in 2012. OSF investment in such efforts would enable us to provide early strategic leadership and support the economies of scale that enhanced collaboration brings, thus bringing a greater return on our investments. Over time, these economies of scale will reduce the need for future funding.

III. For 2013 and Beyond, Advance Very Specific Paradigm Shifting Voter Registration Policies that Maximize Voter Participation and End the Need for OSF and Other Funders to Fund Voter Registration (\$750,000 recommendation).

For 2013, we recommend a deeper focus on identifying and advancing policies to get OSF out of the voter engagement business. In many countries, voter registration is automatic for all who are eligible. In the U.S., as we know, despite the passage of the National Voter Registration Act¹ public agencies and officials are often resistant to registering voters since it either threatens their own standing or can be too much work. Some, conservatives principally, want to limit voter registration since demography is not seen to be their destiny. We should seek to have automatic voter registration for all who are eligible. Having independent groups, such as those that OSF funds, in a perpetual hand to mouth cycle of voter registration every election year does not build a thriving democracy, nor does legal advocacy on voting rights solve this challenge. We recommend new idea generation and increased advocacy for voter registration modernization policies that lead to universal voter registration, the full participation of public agencies in voter registration as laid out in the National Voter Registration Act, and proactive efforts to expand democracy rather than solely focusing on reactive, rear guard defensive efforts such as the Tea Party’s attacks on voter access. This could become a campaign that OSF, via the Board, staff, and grantees, could play a leading role in elevating beyond the current state of advocacy.

IV. “It’s The Economy, Stupid”: Using the 2012 Election to Test Economic Models and Building Effective New Communication Vehicles to Ampify Targeted OSF Priorities (\$2 million recommendation).

Focus on new innovations through field testing the same effective narratives on the economy being developed by Drew Westen and Stan Greenberg in collaboration with Rob Johnson. These would be connected to Media Matters’ economic messaging project and then brought to the city level for field testing, utilizing some of the above constituency and place-based engagement

¹ The National Voter Registration Act is also known as the “Motor Voter” law, in reference to its requirement that public agencies, such as motor vehicle registries, provide voter registration services.

voter efforts. James Carville's oft-cited quote above, regarding the significance of the economy in 1992, will hold true in 2012 and no other funder appears to be looking at ways to integrate economic thinking and economic narrative testing into approaches to voter engagement now in order to build a more coherent narrative going forward. An OSF innovation here would target funding to 2-4 local efforts that will conduct data driven field experiments to determine effective narratives on jobs and the economy that resonate with average voters, and can hopefully be used to end the "missing economic narrative" syndrome. Such efforts will take current narrative discussions beyond *words* and inside the Beltway, Washington, DC consultants and instead focus on *actions*, testing narratives, in real time, with voters in their homes or congregations in key places across the nation. Analysis will then follow to discern what works and this could have broad and lasting relevance to the advocacy universe.

There has been much discussion of the overabundance of ideas and the underwhelming focus on effective vehicles and channels to promote them. The 2012 election will bring a full range of opportunities for testing new more multi-constituent communication vehicles, on several key open society priorities, that OSF could analyze for broader use in the future.

WHY OSF SUPPORT FOR VOTER ENGAGEMENT IS CRITICAL

Background

Following the May U.S. Programs Board Meeting and the approval of additional funding for voter protection and voter enhancement "shared tools," we now propose a complementary request. It's clear that the perpetual cycle of election driven voter investments is never ending and not, in itself, a winning strategy and we understand the Board's various perspectives on this challenge. We look forward to the Board reaching some agreement and providing guidance on how we gradually pull out from that cycle in favor of strategies that could be much more effective in encouraging sustained and broad-scale voter participation.

In many regards, the 2008 election, sadly, was an anomaly, with an historic candidate who produced unprecedented energy and participation from Black, Latino, and young voters. In 2010, there was a dramatic disengagement from the same electorate, other than where there was a specifically targeted campaign (such as with Latino voters in the Southwest states). Clearly, since the 2008 election the energy among the public and these constituencies has receded, particularly among youth and Latino voters. Without OSF's targeted funding of voter engagement, U.S. democracy will continue to be dominated by an older, wealthier, and whiter – and less open society friendly – electorate at a time when shifting demography should mean the contrary. This may please the Tea Party but should trouble us, for a less open society friendly electorate threatens every issue on which we work. A less diverse electorate also means that we'll miss the opportunity in the present to begin to cultivate a long-term culture of democratic participation among Black, Latino, and youth constituencies that can shift how the U.S. addresses open society long into the future.

OSF'S LEADERSHIP IN THE VOTER FUNDING FIELD

OSF is an important leader in the field of non-partisan voter participation strategy development and funding, serving as one of four lead c3 funders – with Carnegie, Ford, and Wellspring – in

strategic thought leadership and funding. Our traditional funding for non-partisan voter engagement, via the Democracy and Power Fund, is budgeted for \$7.3m in the 2012 cycle, of which \$3.9m has been granted in 2011 (leaving roughly \$3.4 million largely for 2012 renewal grants to high performing groups). OSF's existing funding supports national organizations that conduct work at the city and state levels to integrate voter participation into a broader continuum of civic engagement that includes open society advocacy and the development of new leaders from Black, Latino, and youth constituencies. Additionally, the Transparency and Integrity Fund invests in election administration and voter protection related efforts and is part of a group of funders, such as Carnegie, Ford, Wallace Global, and the Democracy Alliance, in that important field. OSF is a key leader in the voter engagement field, and one of several large voter funders, currently committing 11% of the \$65m in c3 funding for this field for the 2012 cycle. A commitment of \$9m in additional funding would go toward a match with other voter funders that includes \$10m in new funding for voter registration that is in the final stages of being approved by the Ford Foundation.

Currently Projected Voter Engagement Funder Budgets for 2012

<u>Foundation</u>	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>New Funding</u>	<u>Total Funding</u>
Ford Foundation	\$10 million	\$10 million	\$20 million
OSF	\$7.3m	\$9m request	\$16.3m (if approved)
Wellspring Advisors	\$10m	possible; unclear	\$10m
Carnegie	\$5.6m		\$5.6m
Bauman	\$5m		\$5m
Stoneman Foundation	\$5m		\$5m
Committee on States	\$4m		\$4m
Democracy Alliance	\$3.5m		\$3.5m
Smaller voter funders (5)	\$15m		\$15m
TOTAL	\$65.4m	\$10m (\$19m w/OSF)	\$84.4m

Should OSF approve this \$9m request and join with Ford's new funding, we would comprise 19% of the overall projected \$84.4m in funding for the voter field for 2012, a healthy and important level for our focus on the most marginalized voters, but not a dominant role that would draw unwanted exposure or create the expectation for us to prop up this field in future years.

Background from OSF Staff

In the 2008 cycle, OSF provided roughly \$10m in c3 funding for Women's Voices, Women Vote, the Youth Engagement Fund, Project Vote, Democracia-USA, the Bus Federation, and other constituency based efforts that were among the highest performing voter registration groups (as evaluated by an influential report from the New Organizing Institute). In the 2010 cycle, OSF invested \$5m funding for the voter engagement of "drop-off voters," those who voted

for the first time in 2008 but were less likely to vote in an off-year election. Overall, the levels of funding from our peer funders also went down significantly in 2010 and some prior voter engagement funders were scared away from funding the work at all due to the ferocity of attacks on voter registration of low-income Black and Latino communities in 2008. OSF funding was insufficient to make up that gap. Additionally, voter registration as a strategy was de-emphasized in 2010 by both grantees and funders in the wake of the 2008 attacks on ACORN and the perception that focusing on drop-off voters was a more cost-efficient target. Regardless of the funding landscape in 2010, it was clear that any efforts that we supported were heading into some very strong political headwinds that were beyond our control. A notable success in 2010 was our funding of effective and large scale Latino voter participation efforts, we are one of the nation's largest funders of Latino civic engagement, and the record off-year voter turnout of Latino voters in California, Colorado, and Nevada.

As mentioned above, the Ford Foundation is in the final stages of green lighting an additional \$10m in new funding for voter work and would like to be joined by other funders. Were OSF to match \$9m to the most marginalized communities working in high priority states with open society advocacy opportunities, it would enable us to provide significant and early funding to some of the largest and most effective voter registration efforts in the nation, including Rock The Vote, Women's Voices, Women Vote², and the groups at the Black, Latino, and youth collaborative tables, including the NAACP and Mi Familia Vota, an important effort in the Latino community. With such a match, OSF total voter engagement funding would comprise 19% of the overall field, significant and essential but not dominant.

REGISTRATION MUST BE A KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITY

The 2008 election brought historically high voter participation from key constituencies – namely African Americans, Latinos, and young people – but we now are confronted by an “enthusiasm gap,” where many first-time voters in 2008 are uninspired to vote again. This gap was underscored by the low turnout in 2010 of the “Rising American Electorate,” the people of color, youth, and unmarried women that now comprise the majority of the American eligible voting population – 52.8% of the U.S.'s adult citizen population – but not yet the majority of voters (only 47.1% of the number of registered voters). On a positive note, there are many newly eligible voters – naturalized citizens and people turning 18 – who are potential additions to the voter rolls. Every day for example, 13,000 young people turn 18 and, underscoring the Latino community's potential power, each month 50,000 young Latinos who are eligible to vote turn 18. We are also confronted by the gap created by the demise of ACORN. Without significant, early

² While often cited as the largest voter registration organization in the nation, Rock the Vote employs an online model to drive young people to download voter registration forms and to, hopefully and voluntarily, send them to their local election officials. Our funding to Rock the Vote, for example, would require it to use our funds to more narrowly target its outreach with Black and Latino youth and to establish local partnerships with city-based organizations that ensure the voter registration forms get completed and submitted appropriately. Similarly, Women's Voices, Women Vote is often cited among the largest voter registration operations in the nation and it employs a mail driven approach to registration. We would also work with them to target their work more narrowly with our funding in order to facilitate evaluation of OSF's impact.

investments in rigorous and large-scale collaborative efforts in low-income Black and Latino communities for 2012, we will see sizable drop-off in voter turnout in this high stakes election.

In a high turnout presidential election, particularly one with an expected \$1 billion in campaign spending from the major party nominees, the strategic “sweet spot” for c3 funders and organizations should focus more heavily on voter registration than getting out the vote. Voter registration is the primary means to get underrepresented communities into the political process and then, later in the election season, electoral campaigns typically have well-funded get out the vote efforts.

In 2008, independent, non-partisan c3 organizations that were not affiliated with any party or candidate – including many OSF grantees – successfully registered more than 2.1 million new voters, including nearly 13% of all new Black voters, more than 9% of new Latino voters, more than 8% of new youth voters, and nearly 11% of all new voters with an annual income under \$25,000. Such independent c3 organizations are often the most trusted messengers for information for infrequent or new voters since they are often more community rooted and can be seen as less biased than a political party or candidate campaign. Independent c3 groups are often the primary means of informing first-time or historically disenfranchised voters about the process of voting. This is especially important for 2012 since many states have taken steps to make it harder for people to register to vote and are now implementing onerous new voter identification rules that could confuse or intimidate new or infrequent voters.

Advancing open society in any policymaking climate is challenging. As we’ve witnessed in recent years, it gets even more difficult in a hostile advocacy climate. Simply put, without high levels of voter participation from Black, Latino, and youth voters in 2012, it is likely that every single OSF priority, domestically and globally, will face a tougher battle. A focus solely on election administration, voting rights, and voter protection, while important, is incomplete. Ultimately, if we do not support rigorous, results oriented, and large scale efforts to inspire high levels of voter engagement from Black, Latino, and youth communities, the need to provide voter protection – unfortunately – declines.

Last, but not least, we can report that the Board’s June, 2011 approval of the “shared tools” funding – via an OSF partnership with Wellspring Advisors to support c3 group access to the highest quality voter lists, Catalist consumer data, Atlas Project state-based data, and targeted technical assistance – is having a tremendous, positive impact. Leading voter engagement groups report that OSF’s shared tools funding commitment has already enhanced their ability to negotiate for lower-cost services, leaving more of their funding able to be deployed for voter registration and getting out the vote in the all-important 2012 election.

Grant ID:

Name of Organization: The Arizona State University Foundation for a New American University

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

Purpose of Grant: To support the creation of an investigative journalism fellowship program at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University. The Program will focus on the increasing influence of special interest money in the American political process after the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision.

Grant Description: The Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication (the Cronkite School), an independent unit within Arizona State University, is recognized internationally for its innovation in journalism and journalism education. The Cronkite School seeks funding to create a new investigative journalism fellowship program that will focus on the increasing influence of special interest money on state-level elections after the Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. The current budget will support approximately ten state-based reporting fellows who will produce stories for print, broadcast, and multi-media distribution in national, state, and local news outlets. In addition to geographic diversity, fellows will be selected to look at various aspects of post-*Citizens United* politics, including races for state offices and judicial elections, which receive little media attention. Fellowships will last one year. This grant would advance the Transparency and Integrity Fund's goal of strengthening accountability journalism on critical open society issues at the state and local level. The grant would also advance the Fund's goal of ensuring fair, impartial, and diverse courts. Finally, the grant would advance the Fund's interest in addressing the negative effects of the *Citizens United* decision on the integrity of elections and the political process.

Previous OSI Support: n/a

Organization Budget: \$1,947,268,118 (Arizona State University)
\$12,847,773 (The Cronkite School)

Project Budget: \$2,000,000

Major Sources of Support: For the Cronkite School (2005-2011):
Donald W. Reynolds Foundation: \$11,175,939

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation: \$7,600,000
Carnegie Corporation of New York: \$3,115,100

Amount Requested: \$2,000,000

Is this a contingent grant? Yes, if the Board authorizes all or part of the \$950,000 from its 2012 budget. If the Board authorizes funds only from its 2011 budget, then this will not be a contingent grant.

Amount Recommended: **\$1,850,000**
\$950,000 from Chairman's Special Fund (T1: 21105)
\$900,000 from Transparency & Integrity Fund (\$625,000 from Journalism, T1:21108; \$250,000 from Ballot, T1:21109; \$25,000 from TIF Rapid Response, T1:21112)

Term: Two years, beginning November 1, 2011

Matching Requirements: 1:1 match on \$150,000

Description of Organization:

Incorporated in 1955, the Arizona State University Foundation for a New American University raises, invests and manages private funds to benefit Arizona State University. While closely aligned with the University, the Foundation is a separate, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is guided by a board of trustees. The Foundation coordinates and directs all major fundraising campaigns on behalf of Arizona State University (ASU), including the Cronkite School. It also serves as the University's entrepreneurial arm in technology commercialization, real estate investment and other initiatives.

Arizona State University is one of Arizona's two premier public universities, with nearly 70,000 students at four campuses. Ranked in the top 100 universities worldwide, *U.S. News and World Reports* named ASU as one of the top five "up and coming" universities in the nation. Since taking the helm in 2002, ASU President Michael Crow has overseen a major restructuring of the university: building programs that focus scholars on solving problems (from global warming to health care) through cross-disciplinary collaboration; attracting students from under-represented communities (and designing curricula to keep them enrolled); and doubling the university's budget.

The Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University is a nationally recognized professional program with a faculty of award-winning professional journalists and world-class media scholars. ASU's journalism program was founded in 1984 and, in 2005, the Cronkite School of Journalism was designated an independent unit of the university. The Cronkite School is recognized internationally for its innovation in journalism and journalism education. It re-conceived its curriculum in 2007 to provide training in multi-media storytelling and the use of social media, in addition to fundamental reporting and writing skills.

The Cronkite School is housed in a new facility in the center of the nation's fifth-largest city. The school is equipped with 14 digital newsrooms and computer labs, two TV studios, 280 digital student work stations, the Cronkite Theater, and the First Amendment Forum. The Cronkite School houses the Donald W. Reynolds National Center for Business Journalism, ABC News on Campus, a Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship program in journalism in the world, and the Carnegie-Knight News21 digital media initiative.

Description of Program for Which Funding Is Sought:

The Cronkite School seeks funding to create an investigative journalism fellowship program that will focus on the increasing influence of special interest money on state level elections after the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. At least ten reporting fellows will work in selected states for twelve months to produce stories for print, broadcast, and multi-media distribution in national, state, and local news outlets. In addition to geographic diversity, fellows will be selected to cover various aspects of post-*Citizens United* politics, including races for state offices and judicial elections, that get little media attention.

An Executive Editor, based at the Cronkite School, will oversee and coordinate the state reporting fellows, to assure high journalistic standards and facilitate the sharing of editorial insight, technology, data analysis, and other content. The Cronkite School will recruit a well-respected journalist who has led major market news organizations and who has specialized in the coverage of money and politics. The editor will help craft story visions, work one-on-one with team reporters, conduct a first edit of all work and create partnerships to publish the project's work in leading state and national news outlets. The editor's job will not only be to guide and mentor reporters during their fellowship (both day-to-day and in quarterly gatherings at the Cronkite School), but to look for patterns in post-*Citizens United* political spending, ones that may connect local stories with the national narrative, and penetrate public consciousness in a way national stories on their own have been unable to do. With this perspective, the Executive Editor will be able to produce stories and analyses of his/her own for national news outlets.

An Advisory Board will oversee the fellowship program as a whole: recruiting the Executive Editor, conducting a national outreach campaign to solicit fellowship applications, selecting the fellows, and providing guidance to the editor and fellows throughout the project's term. This board will consist of Cronkite School professors, veteran journalists, and multi-media reporting experts. OSF will have the opportunity to recommend advisory board members not currently affiliated with the Cronkite School.

Cronkite School professor Leonard Downie will chair the fellowship Advisory Board. Downie is vice president-at-large of *The Washington Post*, where he was Executive Editor from 1991 to 2008. During his 44 years at the *Post*, Downie was an investigative reporter, editor on the local and national news staffs, London correspondent and Managing Editor. Downie helped supervise the newspaper's Watergate coverage. During his 17 years as Executive Editor, the newspaper won 25 Pulitzer prizes. Downie is a founder and board member of Investigative Reporters and Editors Inc. and a board member of the Center for Investigative Reporting. Downie's first job will be to hire the fellowship program's Executive Editor.

The Cronkite School would establish a centralized “news room” for the reporting fellows, to provide a range of support services, including copy editing, fact checking, story placement, and multi-media production assistance. The Cronkite School will create training opportunities for the reporting fellows and will draw on the expertise of TIF grantees, including the Sunlight Foundation, the National Institute on Money in State Politics, MapLight, and the Center for Responsive Politics, which collect campaign finance data and develop tools that help journalists to make effective use of that data.

As currently formulated, the proposed budget would support approximately ten fellowships, while also covering the centralized expenses related to coordination, editing, and support of fellows throughout the program’s term. TIF staff has been speaking with other funders (including Wellspring Advisors and the MacArthur Foundation) about joining OSF in supporting this effort. The Cronkite School advises us that the Knight Foundation and Ethics & Excellence in Journalism may also be interested in supporting individual fellows.

The Cronkite School is committed to having the project fully staffed and operating within six months of a grant: up to three months for the recruitment, hiring and relocation of the project’s editor, and up to three months for the selection of fellows. Reporting fellowships would last twelve months. The Executive Editor would stay on three months beyond the duration of the fellowship to finish projects that weave together the national narrative from individual stories and otherwise close out the program (unless the Cronkite School opts to continue the program beyond OSF’s grant).

Rationale for Recommendation:

The Transparency and Integrity Fund (TIF) recommends a project support grant of \$1,850,000 over two years. This grant would advance TIF’s goal of strengthening accountability journalism on critical open society issues at the state and local level. The grant would also advance TIF’s goal of ensuring fair, impartial, and diverse courts. Finally, the grant would advance TIF’s interest in addressing the negative effects of the Supreme Court’s decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* on the integrity of elections and the political process.

Citizens United eliminated regulation of corporate involvement in our political system, allowing companies to spend millions, anonymously, to influence electoral outcomes. In the 2010 midterm election cycle, 30 percent of outside spending on political ads was attributable to groups that failed to reveal their donors. Additionally, super PACs – now permitted to accept unlimited donations – spent \$83.7 million.¹ Given the rise in the levels of spending and in the secrecy shrouding donations, it is increasingly important to ensure that information about the influence of money on politics is investigated, robustly gathered, and made available to the public.

It is always a valuable journalistic and civic exercise to uncover who the biggest campaign financiers are and what they expect to get in return for their investments. But the significance of such investigative reporting is more crucial at a time when special interest groups are preparing to spend unprecedented amounts of money to influence the most basic and far-reaching political

¹ T.W. Farnam, [72 Super PACs Spent \\$83.7 million on Election, Financial Disclosure Reports Show](#), *Washington Post*, December 3, 2010.

decisions about the future of the country. The 2012 elections will be the first national elections held in the wake of *Citizens United*. With nearly fourteen million Americans out of work, the U.S. engaged in multiple wars, and a fierce political debate in Washington over the place of government in our society, the stakes are that much higher in understanding who is trying to game the system and why. The public has a right to know about the workings of government, including spending by individuals and special interests to influence the political process.

While most news organizations will be focused on the Presidential election and high-profile Senate races, this fellowship program will focus attention on the influence of special interest money on state level executive, legislative, and judicial elections. Thirty-nine states elect all or some of their judiciaries and, over the last decade, spending in judicial elections has more than doubled. Corporate interests have realized that changing the composition of the courts is a cheaper and easier way to advance their interests, particularly given that courts and judicial elections receive little public attention. This fellowship program will help focus attention not only on state high court races in 2012, but on the conflicts of interest justices face in states with big money judicial elections once they are on the bench. This issue is in sharp relief in Wisconsin, where the state Chamber of Commerce is a frequent litigant before justices whom it spent large sums of money to elect.

In another time, one might have expected state and local media to pick up and run with these post-*Citizens United* stories. But with the economic decline of commercial news organizations at the state and local levels over the past decade, a new approach is needed. This fellowship program will help to fill gaps left in the wake of massive layoffs of reporters over the past several years. Across the country, news organizations that once served as essential watchdogs on government and the private sector have been significantly diminished. This is particularly the case in coverage of state government. Declining news coverage of statehouses across the country is one of the most striking consequences of the deteriorating newspaper business. An enormous amount of power is concentrated in state government, and it is critical that the public has ongoing access to a variety of sources of credible information about the effects of state and local legislative action.

This fellowship program will give journalists the freedom to pursue ambitious stories on the linkages between politics and money. These are stories that are time-consuming to report, and difficult to explain. Most news organizations are not willing to devote the resources necessary to allow skilled reporters to follow these stories. Some very good reporting gets done at the national level but, at the state level, there is far less of it. Without state and local stories, the full scope of *Citizens United's* impact cannot be fully understood. The Cronkite School recognizes that, in order for this reporting fellowship program to have any meaningful impact or to capture the public's attention, the fellows must be prepared go beyond the horseshoe or formulaic "X group spent X amount in X state" reporting. They must be skilled storytellers, able to offer context, ask difficult questions, and recognize the complexity and contradictions inherent in these stories without losing the public's interest and attention.

Why the Cronkite School?

TIF staff developed this project after spending the last few months interviewing dozens of

journalists and advocates on money in politics and consulting with experts and academics (see below for a list of people consulted). Everyone we spoke with agreed that a fellowship program that focuses on the impact of money in politics at the state level is much needed and would provide the public and policymakers with essential information about the state of American politics post-*Citizens United*.

In addition to Arizona State's Cronkite School, TIF staff invited proposals from the Columbia University School of Journalism, ProPublica, and the DeWitt Wallace Center for Media and Democracy at Duke University. We received a proposal from Columbia, but determined that its approach was more academic and less entrepreneurial than we wished. Although highly supportive of the fellowship idea, ProPublica did not think it was an appropriate program for that organization to run. Duke was also enthusiastic about the idea, but was not able to accommodate the quick timetable necessary to launch the program.

TIF staff is highly enthusiastic about locating this project at the Cronkite School. TIF staff worked directly with Christopher Callahan, founding Dean of the Cronkite School, to develop the plan, and Callahan is committed to playing an active role in the establishment and success of the fellowship program. Callahan's record suggests he can deliver on his promises. Under his leadership, the Cronkite School created major new professional programs such as Cronkite News Service, the Knight Center for Digital Media Entrepreneurship, the New Media Innovation Lab and Cronkite NewsWatch, a 30-minute newscast that airs nightly on PBS stations across Arizona. He nearly doubled the size of the full-time faculty, attracting national figures such as Leonard Downie Jr., the former Executive Editor of *The Washington Post*, former CNN anchor Aaron Brown, former *Minneapolis Star Tribune* Editor Tim McGuire, BET Vice President Retha Hill, former *Sacramento Bee* Executive Editor Rick Rodriguez and digital media pioneer Dan Gillmor.

In addition, Dean Callahan has raised more than \$30 million, led the journalism school's move to a new state-of-the-art building in downtown Phoenix and led a revision of the curriculum with a new emphasis on high standards, digital media, innovation, entrepreneurship and professional program experiences for students.

Dean Callahan understands that at this time OSF is not committed to supporting this fellowship program beyond the term of this grant. Dean Callahan has expressed interest in turning this fellowship program into a permanent program of the Cronkite School, and believes journalism schools with newsrooms dedicated to producing high-quality journalism through such programs are one response to the changing economic model in journalism. The sustainability model he provides envisages ASU funds, some OSF support and other non-ASU funding sources. ASU has proven experience building temporary initiatives into permanent programs.

While the budget looks large at first glance, we believe it is justified given that the grant will create a full-fledged newsroom at ASU to guide, coordinate, and support the 10+ reporting fellows working in the field. While *some* costs could have been reduced by housing this project at an existing news organization (like ProPublica or the Center for Public Integrity) we believe housing the program at a journalism school (and specifically ASU) will insulate the journalists from the inevitable accusations of bias given the funding source. We have taken a close look at

the budget and discussed it with Dean Callahan. We feel ASU has focused on the right priorities and variables, and developed what is an impactful and efficient structure for the fellowship. Still, without doing the project harm, we trimmed the original budget by \$400,000. We are reluctant to reduce it further, particularly given the important contribution we believe this program will make towards strengthening the case for reform in the post-*Citizens United* political landscape.

Journalists and experts consulted in development of this project:

Sarah Cohen, Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter, Knight Professor of the Practice of Journalism and Public Policy at Duke University, former database editor at the *Washington Post*

Robert Rosenthal, Director of the Center for Investigative Reporting, former Managing Editor of the *Philadelphia Enquirer*

Lowell Bergman, Distinguished Professor of Investigative Reporting at University of California at Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism, Producer for the PBS's *Frontline* and former producer for CBS' *60 Minutes*, former director of Investigative Reporting at ABC News, co-founder of the Center for Investigative Reporting

Richard Tofel, General Manager of ProPublica, former assistant publisher of *The Wall Street Journal*, former Vice President of corporate communications for Dow Jones & Company

James T. Hamilton, Director of the DeWitt Wallace Center for Media and Democracy of Duke University and Charles S. Sydnor Professor of Public Policy

Bill Buzenberg, Executive Director of the Center for Public Integrity, former Vice President of News for National Public Radio, former Senior Vice President of News at American Public Media/Minnesota Public Radio

Ellen Miller, Co-founder and Executive Director of the Sunlight Foundation, founder of the Center for Responsive Politics and Public Campaign

Nick Lemann, Dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University, former writer for the *Washington Post*, former correspondent for the *Atlantic Monthly* and the *New Yorker*

Peter Stone, Team Leader of the Money and Politics Desk at the Center for Public Integrity

Peter Slevin, Associate Professor at the Medill School of Northwestern University, national political correspondent for the *Washington Post*

David Bennahum, President of the American Independent News Network

Andrew Rasiej, Founder of the Personal Democracy Forum

Michael Waldman, Executive Director, Brennan Center for Justice

Daniel Newman, Co-Founder and Executive Director of MapLight

Mark Schmitt, Senior Research Fellow at the New America Foundation, former Director of Policy and Research at the Open Society Institute

Andy Hall, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism

Bill Leuders, Money and Politics Project Director at the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism

Karen Hobert Flynn, Vice President for State Operations at Common Cause, former Executive Director of Common Cause Connecticut

Larry Makinson, Senior Fellow at the Sunlight Foundation, former Executive Director of the Center for Responsive Politics, former Senior Fellow at the Center for Public Integrity

Ed Bender, Executive Director of the National Institute on Money in State Politics, former Research Director for the Money in Western Politics Project of the Western States Center

Kevin Davis, CEO and Executive Director of the Investigative News Network

Leah Rush, Executive Director of the Midwest Democracy Network, former Director of State Projects at the Center for Public Integrity

MEMORANDUM

TO: U.S. PROGRAMS BOARD
FROM: ANDY KO, CAMPAIGN FOR A NEW DRUG POLICY
SUBJECT: ESTABLISHING A U.S. DRUG POLICY RESEARCH CENTER
DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2011

Request for Authorization to Launch the Drug Policy Research Center (including estimate of likely need for Board/Chair Discretionary funds)

The Campaign for a New Drug Policy seeks to establish a drug policy research center that will conduct independent, evidence-based research regarding alternatives to punitive drug policies, develop and evaluate public health approaches to drug use, expand the field of academic research in the area of drug policy reform (which is now rarely funded by federal agencies), and generate informed debate about alternatives to the War on Drugs paradigm among academicians, policymakers and the public. While the harms caused by the War on Drugs are widely acknowledged, the orthodoxy of the “war” mentality has limited inquiry and debate. There is consequently a dearth of viable alternatives to help the public and policymakers move from the current, punitive paradigm to one that promotes public health, protects public safety, supports healthy communities, and respects human rights.

As set out in more detail in the background section below, the Campaign believes that the production of balanced, evidence-based information, coupled with an aggressive communications effort to disseminate research findings and new models, is a key first step to identifying alternatives to the status quo and building public support for reform. As discussed at OSF’s Global Drug Policy meeting earlier this year, the proposed research center would complement a similar effort OSF is undertaking in Europe. Accordingly, after surveying the field and identifying the key attributes of successful research centers, the Campaign solicited a proposal from Professor Craig Reinerman, a sociologist at the University of California-Santa Cruz who has written and taught extensively on drug policy issues. Reinerman is requesting support over five years to establish a national drug policy research center within the University of California system at the Berkeley or San Francisco campus.

Before proceeding with a grant of approximately \$1.1 million from its 2011 budget to launch the center (covering start-up and first year expenses), *the Campaign seeks the Board’s authorization of the center as funding for the subsequent four years (2013-2016) will exceed the Campaign’s budget and require support from the Board/Chair’s discretionary funds.* Specifically, by year two (2013), the center’s annual budget is likely to be \$1,750,000. To help the center to become sustainable and maintain a level of activity (including a strong communications effort) to generate new ideas and debate on drug policy that is grounded in evidence-based research, Campaign staff envision USP making significant but declining annual grants of support. Grants will be subject to the center making satisfactory progress.

At this time, Campaign staff recommend that USP would make the following investments in the center: \$1,750,000 in year two (2013); \$1,500,000 in year three (2014); \$1,250,000 in year four (2015); and \$1,000,000 in year five (2016). *The Campaign anticipates contributing \$1 million over these four years (or \$250,000 per year, starting in 2013) and requests that the Board/Chair make a parallel contribution of \$4.5 million over four years to sustain the operation of the center and support its efforts to attract additional funding from other private and public sources.* (The Campaign will support planning and year one expenses entirely; the Campaign may also make a \$250,000 grant to the center in 2012, from its uncommitted funds, depending on what the needs are beyond the initial \$1.1 million grant the Campaign would make in 2011.)

	Campaign	Board/Chair Funds	Total
2011 (Start-up)	\$1.1 million		\$1.1 million
2012 (year 1)	Up to \$250,000		Up to \$250,000
2013 (year 2)	\$250,000	\$1.5 million	\$1.75 million
2014 (year 3)	\$250,000	\$1.25 million	\$1.5 million
2015 (year 4)	\$250,000	\$1.0 million	\$1.25 million
2016 (year 5)	\$250,000	\$ 750,000	\$1 million
TOTAL	\$2.1 million - \$2.35 million	\$4.5 million	\$\$6.6 - \$6.82 million

Background

The Campaign, which was established in November 2010 to coordinate the various components of USP’s work relating to drug policy reform, is pursuing four strategies:

- Production and dissemination of evidence-based knowledge regarding alternative, non-punitive and health based drug policy;
- Education and mobilization to strengthen public support, including among directly affected populations and unlikely allies, and to build political will for non-punitive drug policy reform;
- Creation of an infrastructure for a health-based drug policy through support for addiction treatment, harm reduction and social supports; and
- Demonstration of real-world alternatives to the criminalization of drug users and low-level sellers, with an emphasis on local opportunities for reform.

Establishing a drug policy research center falls squarely under the first priority (i.e., knowledge production and dissemination) and would produce research that is crucial to successful outcomes in the remaining three priorities.

Evidence-based research regarding alternative drug policies is virtually nonexistent. While reform advocates continue to effectively criticize the “War on Drugs,” the dearth of credible information about alternatives has brought efforts to establish a new drug policy paradigm to an impasse. The deficit of evidence-based research in this complex and politically charged area of public policy contributes to decision-makers’ widespread unwillingness to support alternative approaches. Similarly, the limited number of attempts to establish alternative models in the U.S. – even those demonstrating remarkably positive outcomes – have generally been “trees falling in the forest,” with little rigorous evaluation or means to credibly publicize their success. This undertaking will require sophisticated, interdisciplinary analysis, clear explanation that is accessible by the intended audience, and substantial communication expertise and resources to disseminate information widely.

In the fall of 2010, a group of experts consulted by OSF identified the need to build knowledge about alternative drug policies and recommended that OSF establish a drug policy research center. Following up on that recommendation, an OSF Working Group¹ contracted with High Noon Communications to evaluate similar research centers and make recommendations, which were submitted in its March 2011 report.² Based on the report and discussions with outside experts, the Campaign concluded that:

- **A university-based center** located within a leading research institute would make the strongest contribution to drug policy reform.
- **Choice of the center director** is the most important consideration. Adopting the set of key characteristics set out in the report, the director would be a tenured faculty member at the host university and have:
 - Demonstrated success in research on drug policy and drug policy alternatives
 - Strong academic credentials and a history of publishing in leading peer-reviewed journals
 - Demonstrated management skills, including the ability to work well in a university setting;
 - Respect within the drug policy research and advocacy communities;
 - Experience working effectively in or with those who are in policymaking position;
 - Experience with media appearances and strategy or an appreciation for the importance of communications and willingness to be trained.³

¹ Andy Ko, Diana Morris, Leonard Noisette, Kima Taylor, Daniel Wolfe (OSF-International Harm Reduction Development), Nkechi Taifa (OSF-DC), and Zoe Hudson (OSF-DC)

² See Appendix 1 for a summary chart of recommendations

³ “Establishing a Drug Policy Research Center,” High Noon Communications (March 2011) at 29.

- The work of the center staff should rely primarily on **research faculty** (rather than tenure track academics) and be guided by an **advisory body** able to offer a cross-section of perspectives.
- A dedicated **in-house communication team** and established communications plan are essential.
- The center should take a **multidisciplinary approach** and work to expand the small community of academics working in this field. This could take the form of a network in which academic nodes were linked virtually across a number of universities.
- The center should produce a mix of **long-term, peer-reviewed research** and **shorter term, strategic research**. Of particular importance is peer-reviewed research regarding reform issues that government is unlikely to fund.

The Campaign also concluded that:

- Funding structure is a major consideration in ensuring a center's viability and effectiveness. A **significant, multi-year gift** from OSF at the outset will provide stability and make it possible to create incentives through matching funds and through an evaluation process tied to grant renewal. The consultant's survey suggests that a minimum of **\$1-\$1.5M annually for at least five years** would be needed.
- While OSF would provide core funding, **multiple funders** will demonstrate broad support for the center's work and add credibility within this complex policy debate. Campaign staff have already begun to reach out to other funders to interest them in supporting the center and, along with center staff, will continue to do so.

Center Proposal

There are a number of challenges in establishing the center and its work to address this complex set of issues and relationships. Foremost has been identifying and soliciting proposals from qualified candidates for center director. Few academics working in the area of drug policy reform possess the range of key characteristics listed above. For example, while a particular academic might have strong academic credentials and extensive resume of peer-reviewed publications, he or she might not be respected within the drug policy research and advocacy communities, or could lack administrative experience. Professor Craig Reinerman presents a combination of academic credentials, managerial experience, a track record of commitment to drug policy reform efforts, and respect within the advocacy community that make him a strong a candidate for founding director of the proposed research center.

Professor Reinerman proposes to locate the center at UC-Berkeley or, alternatively, at UC-San Francisco, which he believes present substantial opportunities for interdisciplinary work. In addition to the center director, the initial five-person staff would include: a senior

scientist, a research analyst, an information specialist, a media communications specialist, and an administrative assistant. Staffing would increase as the center's research and public education program expands. The center agenda would be guided by an interdisciplinary Advisory Board and would interact with a global network of affiliated drug policy research centers and scholars.

The center would have four core functional priorities: research, training, public education and policy development. Lines of research would be guided by a study based on in-depth interviews with drug policy reform advocates, policy makers, and other drug policy researchers regarding the most urgent research needs and opportunities, as well as the views of the Advisory Board. The center's output would include some combination of peer-reviewed publication and center generated reports. Public education materials would be produced to make the center's academic work accessible to the boarder public, including pamphlets, policy briefs, fact sheets and op-ed essays. The center would establish a prominent Internet presence and capitalize on opportunities for streaming video, podcasts and social media forums.

Appendix 1 – Chart from “Establishing a Drug Policy Research Center,” High Noon Communications (March 2011)

Key Characteristics of a Center Whose Research Drives Policy Change

