

The Transparency Fund
Planned Grants for Catch-up Docket
September 12, 2012

The Transparency Fund supports groups working to promote: 1) broad access to information, 2) high-quality accountability journalism on critical open society issues, 3) an impartial and diverse judiciary, and 4) broad and equitable access to the ballot. This Fund includes a portfolio of 65 grantees with a grantmaking budget of \$14.5 million in 2012. On this docket, we will present 7 grants for approval, totaling \$2,780,000. In some cases, grant terms and amounts have not been finalized.

I. Access to Information

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington

General Support, \$300,000 over two years (renewal)

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) is an aggressive watchdog group dedicated to ensuring the integrity of public officials and the federal government. Using a combination of research, litigation, and strategic communications, CREW investigates and exposes government officials who violate ethics rules and laws, and thus undermine public trust in government. CREW also focuses specifically on issues of money in politics, aiming to address the lack of transparency in the campaign finance system by advocating for disclosure of political spending, and exposing such spending in the absence of such reforms. This grant would advance the Transparency Fund's interest in addressing the undue influence of money on the American political process.

II. Journalism for an Open Society

NPR StateImpact

Project Support, \$1,000,000 over eighteen months (renewal)

StateImpact is a collaboration among NPR and local public radio stations in eight pilot states to examine public policy issues in-depth. The project seeks to inform and engage communities with broadcast and online news about how state government decisions affect people's lives. StateImpact's focus is explanatory reporting, data-driven journalism and supporting a strong network of reporters, stations and states that collaborate with one another.

The network includes two reporters in each pilot state who explore a single public policy issue and tell stories about the people affected by the government decisions. The goal is to put news in context, providing insight and background rather than just the latest headlines. StateImpact reports will run daily on each state's site and on participating local public radio stations.

Transparency Fund support enabled NPR to launch this pilot. The eight pilot states were chosen for regional diversity and based on member stations' commitment to collaboration and issue-focused coverage within their states. Support for NPR StateImpact would advance the

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

III. Broad and Equitable Access to Ballot

Moritz College of Law at Ohio State University

Project Support, \$100,000 over two years (new)

Moritz College of Law houses the Election Law @ Moritz program, a research program focused on election law, litigation, and policy. This grant would support a two year research project aimed at testing the Supreme Court's assumption in *Citizens United* that independent expenditures cannot have a corrupting influence on legislators. Focusing on 2012 federal races in which such expenditures are made, the project will interview candidate, retiring legislators, campaign staff, and the organizations that made such expenditures to better understand the place and power of this growing tool of electoral influence. The results of the study will be published but will also be useful to lawyers challenging existing precedents (such as *Citizens United*) in future litigation. This grant would advance the Transparency Fund's goal of broadening access to the democratic process by reducing the influence of money in politics. Specifically, it would support research efforts aimed at undermining existing Supreme Court precedents that limit reform.

Center for Electoral Politics & Democracy at Fordham University

Project Support, \$600,000 over two years (new)

The Center for Electoral Politics & Democracy is dedicated to research and teaching elections. This grant (along with funding from the Omidyar Network's Democracy Fund) would support a research working group that would conduct "field experiments" to test the assumptions undergirding Supreme Court campaign finance precedents. Representing a new methodological approach in political science research, field experiments are studies that take place in and measure real-world behaviors and outcomes. The working group plans to conduct experiments that speak to the question of how money buys influence and access, how regulatory bodies enforce campaign finance regulations, and how voters respond to information about the flow of money or violations of campaign finance regulations. Research results will be shared through white papers, peer-reviewed publications, briefings for the media and advocates, and op-eds. Results of these experiments are likely to be used in future litigation on campaign regulations. This grant would advance the Transparency Fund's goal of broadening access to the democratic process by reducing the influence of money in politics. Specifically, it would support research efforts aimed at undermining existing Supreme Court precedents that limit reform.

Center for Political Accountability

Project Support, \$130,000 over one year (renewal)

The Center for Political Accountability or CPA is a non-partisan organization that seeks to bring transparency and accountability to the political contribution policies and practices of U.S. companies. CPA works with corporate leaders, institutional shareholders, and business ethics

organizations to establish best practices for corporate political spending and then persuade corporations to adopt those standards. Thus far, CPA has persuaded over half the S&P 100 to adopt transparency policies. CPA created an index to rate companies on their political disclosure and accountability policies and practices that it is now using to persuade poorly-ranked corporations to improve their practices. This grant would advance the Transparency and Integrity Fund's goal of broadening access to the democratic process by reducing the influence of money in politics. It would also advance the Fund's goal of providing funding to core judicial independence organizations.

Committee for Economic Development

Project Support, \$150,000 over one year (renewal)

The Committee for Economic Development (CED) is an independent, nonpartisan organization of business and university leaders dedicated to policy research and advocacy on major economic and social issues. CED has provided a business voice for campaign finance and judicial selection reforms for over fifteen years. In 2013, CED proposes to take the issues of public funding, transparency, and judicial independence and continue to build business support for reforms. Through these efforts, CED will promote the development and implementation of policies and advance proposals that improve the health of our democracy. The grant would advance the Transparency and Integrity Fund's goal of broadening access to the democratic process by reducing the influence of money in politics. It would also advance the Fund's goal of providing funding to core judicial independence organizations.

Public Citizen

Project Support, \$500,000 over one year

Public Citizen is a national organization dedicated to assuring that government and corporations are held accountable for their actions. This grant would support Public Citizen and its partners in the Corporate Accountability Coalition, a broad-based alliance of grassroots community organizations, good government reform groups, socially responsible investing firms, academic experts, and others whose goal is to increase accountability for corporations that seek to influence elections. The Coalition is working at the state and national levels to convince corporations to voluntarily withdraw from or disclose all campaign spending (including contributions to groups like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce) while simultaneously educating the public about the need for state and federal reforms that provide shareholders with more timely and reliable information about and control over corporate spending. At the federal level, the Coalition will continue to put pressure on the SEC to promulgate a rule requiring disclosure of political spending. Support for Public Citizen would advance the Transparency and Integrity Fund's goal of broadening access to the democratic process by reducing the influence of money in politics.