

Transparency & Integrity Fund

Brief Descriptions of Grants Recommended for 2010 Docket III Docket III: September 27, 2010 (descriptions circulated August 10, 2010)

Twenty-three grant recommendations totaling \$5,590,000 are listed below by TIF portfolio area.

Access to Information

Four grants totaling \$1,050,000

Citizens for Responsibility & Ethics in Washington

General support (renewal) \$250,000; Project support (new), \$200,000 over two years

Since it began its work in 2003, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) has played a key role in exposing the culture of corruption in Washington and motivating the public and policymakers to change it. CREW accomplishes this through high impact legal actions including lawsuits, Freedom of Information Act requests, ethics complaints, Federal Election Commission complaints, Internal Revenue Service complaints, and Department of Justice complaints; exhaustively investigated reports to educate the public and influence public discourse and policy; comprehensive communications strategy to maximize media coverage and mobilize public support for reform; and collaboration with organizations from across the political spectrum to foster an open and accountable government. This grant would provide general support for CREW's work.

We also recommend giving CREW a one-time project grant to address the Supreme Court's January 2010 decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* allowing unlimited corporate money to flow into politics and shroud political finances in secrecy. Focusing on a couple of high profile races, CREW will use a multi-faceted approach that includes research and communications to analyze the impact of the decision on the 2010 election cycle and reveal what the loopholes in the disclosure requirements conceal, and thereby educate the public and mobilize support for reform. As a trusted go-to source on congressional ethics, with a proven track record of publishing hard-hitting investigative reports and executing sophisticated and comprehensive communications strategies to expose wrongdoing, CREW is uniquely positioned to address the lack of transparency created by *Citizens United*.

National Institute on Money in State Politics

General support (renewal) \$425,000; Project support (new) \$100,000, over two years

This grant would provide general support to NIMSP for its collection, analysis and dissemination of campaign finance data. NIMSP is the only organization in the nation that collects all campaign contribution data for every election in the country, including judicial elections. Their database serves as the foundation of much of the transparency technology developing today, most notably Maplight.org. NIMSP is also playing a major role in developing internet-based tools for monitoring individual states' allocations of stimulus dollars.

We also recommend providing one-time project support to NIMSP for its work to collect and make available at www.FollowTheMoney.org all independent corporate spending on political activities in the 2006, 2008 and 2010 elections in at least 22 states. NIMSP will compare 2006 and 2008 elections activities (before the *Citizens United* decision) with 2010 activities (after the decision), focusing special attention on states that have already acted to repeal their state corporate expenditure bans. NIMSP will then publish state-specific reports for those states in which it identifies significant information of public interest; an *Overview of Independent Expenditures in 2010 Elections*; and a *Best Practices Guide* for policymakers and agencies to improve state disclosure laws and reporting requirements for future elections. News reporters, policy groups, academic researchers and the public will be able to monitor and investigate how entities' political activities affect the outcome of the elections and how they may correlate with their political donations to candidates, ballot measures and political parties, and with their lobbyist networks within and across states. It will inform policy debates as states and the federal government respond to the effects of *Citizens United*.

MAPLight.org

Project support (renewal), \$300,000 over two years

MAPLight.org uses technology to increase government transparency, specifically by using data to illuminate the connection between campaign donations and legislative votes. MAPLight is a national resource for journalists, and has earned a reputation as an accurate and nonpartisan information source. This grant will support the launch of a 'MAPLight.org Wisconsin' site that will extend its groundbreaking transparency work to the Wisconsin State Legislature. MAPLight will work closely with state and local media outlets and journalists covering the Wisconsin legislature, making it easy to include critical money/votes data in news coverage of state politics. MAPLight is developing working relationships with OSI grantees in Wisconsin, including the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism and the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign.

Collaboration on Government Secrecy (American University)

Project support (tie-off; renewal), \$75,000 over one year (\$25,000 from NSHR)

This grant would provide renewal funding for the Collaboration on Government Secrecy (CGS). Run by former Department of Justice information policy attorney Dan Metcalfe, a highly respected authority on government transparency policy, CGS has spent the last two years convening government officials and transparency advocates to identify and discuss issues of importance to the field. In 2011, CGS will continue hosting these convenings (including to analyze the Obama administration's transparency and open government policies) and release a right-to-know report card for members of Congress. This will be TIF's final grant to CGS.

Journalism

Seven grants totaling \$1,500,000

New America Media

General support (renewal), \$400,000 over one year

New America Media (NAM) is the country's first and largest network of ethnic news organizations in the United States. Over 51 million ethnic adults connect to each other, to home countries and to America through 3000+ ethnic media organizations – a fast growing sector of American journalism. NAM is dedicated to bringing the voices of ethnic communities, immigrants, young people, and the elderly into the national discourse so that people will be

better informed, better connected to one another, and better able to actively participate in civic life. NAM operates a national AP-style ethnic media news exchange that integrates the ethnic media sector into more mainstream American journalism. NAM has built partnerships with 38 journalism schools, which serve as hubs for regional networks of ethnic media in virtually every region of the country. In a highly-fractured media environment, NAM's collaborative model links ethnic media outlets to one another, with mainstream news outlets and with new public service media projects to connect otherwise isolated and fragmented communities, building inter-ethnic, inter-racial and inter-generational information exchange. (This is a 1-year grant because NAM is being absorbed into the Anchor Grant Portfolio as of 2012.)

The Citizen Media Law Project of Harvard University's Berkman Center for Internet and Society

Project support (new), \$200,000 over two years (may hold for November docket)

This grant would support the Citizen Media Law Project (CMLP) at Harvard University's Berkman Center for Internet and Society. CMLP works to ensure that individuals and organizations involved in online journalism and digital media have access to the legal resources, education, and help that they need to thrive. The CMLP, which launched in May 2007, focuses its work on three broad areas: legal education and training; litigation and *pro bono* legal services; and the collection and analysis of legal threats facing online speakers and publishers. This grant would support CMLP's work to address essential legal needs within the journalism community, specifically supporting: (1) CMLP's ongoing work providing legal education, assistance, and research addressing the legal threats facing journalists and online media; (2) the expansion of CMLP's work with noncommercial journalism centers, including several OSI grantees. Many of these news outlets are developing partnerships with universities, especially journalism schools that wish to take a more active role in the production and dissemination of news; and (3) the development of law school clinical programs which are capable of providing much needed legal assistance to media clients.

National Freedom of Information Coalition

Project support (new), \$200,000 over two years (may hold for November docket)

The National Freedom of Information Coalition, based at the University of Missouri School of Journalism, is an alliance of state-based freedom of information organizations, academic and First Amendment Centers, journalism societies and attorneys. NFOIC helps start up new and support existing citizen-driven Freedom of Information and First Amendment organizations. It then works with those coalitions to strengthen government transparency and offer a national, collective voice on FOI issues. The economic downturn in the commercial news media has resulted in declining levels of freedom of information advocacy and litigation, especially at the state level. Without the consistent threat of litigation, government incentives to comply with freedom of information laws are significantly diminished. At a time when promising new accountability journalism centers marshalling the power of electronic data rely on strong freedom of information laws to help increase public access to information, this grant would enable NFOIC to strengthen state freedom of information efforts and help fill litigation gaps.

Investigative News Network

General support (renewal), \$200,000 over two years (may hold for November docket)

This renewal grant would support the Investigative News Network (INN), a collaboration of 32 non-commercial news organizations. INN aims to maximize the quality, audience and sustainability of public interest watchdog journalism on the state and local levels. INN will explore possibilities for collaborative content development (such as state capitol coverage schemes, means of covering and engaging communities, multi-media approaches to reporting, etc.), shared resources (such as legal help, data analysis and research), shared distribution, and revenue/sustainability options, for instance, syndication, or advertising networks. The ultimate goal of this effort is to build and link together state and regional investigative organizations to create a 50-state network of state and regional centers for investigative and public interest reporting.

New Orleans Lens

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

This renewal grant would support the New Orleans Lens (the Lens), a new journalism initiative that provides high-quality journalism and data-driven investigation and analysis on Gulf Coast issues including criminal justice, education, local government, the environment, the economy, land use, and politics.

NewsTrust

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

NewsTrust is a nonpartisan social news network committed to news literacy and civic engagement. NewsTrust was developed in 2006 to address the growing problems of information overload, misinformation, and distrust on the Internet, caused by the rise of opinion news and non-fact checked journalism, as well as media consolidation and newsroom cutbacks. NewsTrust online review tools enable the public to evaluate accuracy, fairness, context, and other core journalistic principles—and help people become more discriminating news consumers in the process. This grant would support the creation of an online news hub in Baltimore, adapting its news curation platform to help improve the way people get their local news and information in that city. In collaboration with OSI-Baltimore, NewsTrust will generate strong community engagement with local high schools and universities, libraries, public media, ethnic media, and local papers in Baltimore.

Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism

General support (renewal), \$100,000 over two years (may hold for November docket)

The Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism (WCIJ) works with its partners and mainstream and ethnic news media to improve the quality and increase the amount of accountability journalism in Wisconsin. OSI support enabled WCIJ to launch in 2009 as a first-of-its-kind alliance with public broadcasting journalists in six cities around the state, plus students and faculty of the journalism school at Wisconsin's flagship university. WCIJ produces investigative reports independently and in partnership with Wisconsin Public Broadcasting. WCIJ assists a range of Wisconsin news outlets, including ethnic media, to pursue their own investigations or produce joint projects. WCIJ also trains citizens to investigate issues affecting trust in government and quality of life.

Election Reform

Six grants totaling \$1,000,000

Pew Center on the States

Project support (renewal), \$250,000 over one year (\$150,000 from TIF and \$100,000 from JEHT)

Pew Charitable Trusts' 'Center on the States' (PCS) is a "go to" source for authoritative analysis of experiments in the field and a trusted arbiter of nonpartisan reform. It is one of the strongest proponents for including the voices of state and local election officials in national discussions over electoral reform. This grant would continue to support PCS' Voter Registration and Modernization Initiative which complements the work of OSI-supported groups working on the related national level reform. (PCS is, in effect, building the state infrastructure that would be required by any federal action on the matter.) The Initiative continues to help states transition toward voter registration systems that are automatic and permanent, more efficient to administer and more cost-effective. Over the last year, PCS educated state officials on modernization and worked with state elections officials to design a vastly improved registration system. Along with developing policy solutions, PCS carefully analyzed the technical and financial issues modernization reforms entailed. As a result of PCS' work, a dozen states are poised to adopt and implement this new system in 2011, with other states very likely to come on board soon. The system will be independently evaluated over 2011-12 and improved based on the assessment. In addition, PCS is developing a Performance Index for Elections, and will have a prototype ready next year, and will release it and measure states against its indices following the 2012 election. While the demise of JEHT resulted in the loss of more than \$3 million in funding for Pew's election initiatives overall, it remains a leading resource of both election information and innovation.

Rockefeller Family Fund

Project support (renewal), \$200,000 over one year (\$100,000 from TIF and \$100,000 from Seize the Day)

This grant would continue to support the Voter Registration Modernization Initiative through a pooled fund at the Rockefeller Family Fund (RFF). The Fund's goals – which complement the state focused goals of PCS described above - remain federal reform requiring states to adopt automatic and permanent voter registration and Election Day corrections. (National reform would spur states toward reform faster.) To this end, RFF will continue coordinating the work of a number of organizations including the Pew Center on the States, the Brennan Center, the Campaign Legal Center, and the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights, the American Association of Retired Persons and the National Military Family Association. Collectively, these groups undertake research, outreach, organizing and communication, and public education to develop and generate support for these policies. The current grant would allow the effort to continue making strides towards its goals by continuing to demonstrate the need and bipartisan support for this critical reform, and by providing program and logistical assistance to its blue-ribbon 'Committee to Modernize Voter Registration.' Using the 2010 election, the Initiative will publicize additional evidence of the problems associated with our antiquated registration system by highlighting both compelling personal stories of disenfranchisement as well as macro registration problems identified across the country. The Initiative will also continue to engage

local and state election officials, whose voices and experience are critical in explaining the rationale for major reforms and who helped develop the contours of national policy reform.

Corporate Disclosure.Org

Project support (new), \$150,000 over 1 year

With this grant, CorporateDisclosure.Org or CDO would, through an exciting, bold and aggressive new campaign, promote transparency and accountability in the use of corporate money in direct and indirect financing of electioneering and lobbying campaigns. CDO will engage in research, communications and corporate engagement. Specifically, CDO would conduct non- traditional in-depth research on corporations concealing expenditures; set up a website to provide a bank of materials on trade associations and opaque corporations; generate earned press/law review/trade association publications/white papers; work closely with other groups already doing such work including TIF grantees NIMSP, CED and CPA; educate the business community about the disconnect between a business's own policy agenda and trade association/front group lobbying, and support businesses that distance themselves from unrepresentative trade associations. They will also foster a learning community amongst the other public interest and transparency groups (again including NIMSP, CED and CPA) while positioning themselves as a research and information sharing center.

The Main Street Alliance

Add-on to D&P grant approved June 30, TIF contribution of \$100,000 over 2 years

TIF is considering making a Docket III grant to the Main Street Alliance (MSA) for work on campaign finance. MSA and its state partners are strongly positioned to bring a powerful and constructive small business voice into public debates on campaign reform and fair elections at both the state and federal levels. A 'small business voice' built on small business owners speaking for themselves has the potential to significantly impact campaign finance issues, particularly when groups claiming to represent small businesses (primarily the US Chamber of Commerce and National Federation of Independent Businesses) are unfriendly to campaign finance reform. MSA's potential organizing activities in support of national and state campaign finance reform would include store-to-store outreach to educate business owners and build supporter lists; business owner sign-on letters; small business roundtable discussions; delegation meetings with decision-makers; press conferences and research releases; pitching small business spokespeople to local media; op-ed placement and letter to the editor drives; testimony at public hearings; and creative business-based visibility campaigns (eg, posters in storefront windows or a rubber stamp call to action on disposable coffee cups).

Citizens for Responsibility & Ethics in Washington

Project support (new), \$200,000 over two years

See description of project grant in *Access to Information*, above.

National Institute for Money in State Politics

Project support (new), \$100,000 over 18 months

See description of project grant in *Access to Information*, above.

Judiciary

Four grants, totaling \$590,000

American Judicature Society

Project support (renewal), \$200,000 over two years

AJS would use this grant to continue its research, education, and advocacy in defense of judicial merit selection systems and support their adoption in states that currently elect judges. AJS would support coalitions seeking to develop and implement merit selection processes in Minnesota, Nevada, and Pennsylvania while building momentum toward this end in Ohio and Wisconsin. AJS is also committed to helping improve existing merit selection systems, working with stakeholders to assure that selection panels strive to improve judicial diversity and to improve the overall transparency of merit selection processes. AJS will do this work in conjunction with the Justice at Stake Coalition.

National Institute for Fair Courts at Cardozo Law School

General support (new), \$40,000 over one year

This grant would provide start-up support to the National Institute for Fair Courts as it establishes itself as an independent organization dedicated to access to justice issues in civil and criminal settings. Founded by David Udell, who until now has been the founding Director of the Brennan Center's Justice Program, the Institute will engage in research, advocacy, and provision of technical assistance to state governments, reform advocates, and others on matters including indigent defense and language access in the courts. In the past year, Udell has become deeply engaged in bringing access to justice issues into much sharper focus within TIF-supported Justice at Stake campaign and its related coalition. That work will continue with greater intensity as this Institute establishes itself with the support of other foundations. A separate project support grant would support an Institute-led planning process to create a "Justice Index" (see below).

Center for Political Accountability

General support (renewal), \$150,000 over 25 months

This renewal grant would provide general support to CPA, which strives to bring transparency and accountability to corporate political spending. Its goal is to make political disclosure and oversight a basic corporate governance standard. By conducting investigations and issuing reports, it makes the case for why corporations need to act. CPA leads a coalition of 26 partners in engaging companies and filing shareholder resolutions to get companies to adopt disclosure of their political spending as company policy. By the end of June 2010, CPA had persuaded over half the companies in the S&P 100, to disclose their political spending and require board oversight. CPA then monitors each company to ensure compliance. This grant complements an earlier grant to CPA for post-*Citizens United* work which it is doing jointly with the Committee for Economic Development.

Committee for Economic Development

Project support (renewal), \$200,000 over 24 months

This renewal grant would provide project support for CED's Judicial Selection project. The project advances appointment as the preferred method of selecting judges and advocates for reforms that reduce the impact of money and partisan politics on the judiciary. Its method is to

both educate and mobilize the business community to speak out on behalf of fair and impartial courts that are free from special interest money and politics. It is a valuable member of the Justice at Stake Campaign and represents an important constituency in calls for judicial independence, particularly in the wake of *Citizens United*. This grant complements an earlier grant to CED for post-*Citizens United* work which it is doing jointly with CPA.

State Strategies

Two grants, totaling \$1,050,000

New Orleans Coalition on Open Governance

Project support (renewal), \$900,000 over one year (\$350,000 from SOF)

This renewal grant would provide a second year of support to the developing New Orleans Coalition on Open Governance (NOCOG). Specifically, grant funds would support groups in the coalition, and some new partners, as they launch two campaigns, one that seeks to create a more open and responsive city budget process (particularly as it relates to criminal justice budgets); and a second that will focus on implementation of the Citizen Participation Process, a new program adopted as part of the city charter revisions to assure citizens have space to engage in policy making and policy execution. A separate grant to the *New Orleans Lens*, affiliated with NOCOG, is being recommended by TIF's Journalism portfolio. We are recommending a one year, rather than a two year, grant as NOCOG is still in a relatively early phase of its development and actions. We may also have to make this grant a set of smaller grants rather than a single grant. This grant will go up with the October 18th SOF docket.

Wisconsin Democracy Campaign

General support, \$150,000 over two years (renewal)

This renewal grant would mark the first general support grant to WDC as TIF begins to solidify support for core organizations in Wisconsin. TIF has supported WDC over the past few years for its work on judicial independence, specifically for education efforts related to that state's Supreme Court election system and the need for public financing and recusal reform. WDC plans to continue that work while also working on broader democracy issues such as campaign finance in the post-*Citizens United* era, and monitoring the influence of money on the state's legislative process.

Although the following grants are being made out of the *Journalism* and *Access to Information* portfolios, they are also part of our *State Strategies* work:

New Orleans Lens

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

See description in *Journalism*, above.

NewsTrust

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

See description in *Journalism*, above.

Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism

General support (renewal), \$100,000 over two years (may hold for November docket)

See description in *Journalism*, above.

MapLight.org

Project support (renewal), \$300,000 over two years

See description in *Access to Information*, above.

Flexible Funds/Cross-fund Collaboration

Two grants totaling \$400,000

Cardozo Justice Project

Project support (new), \$100,000 over six months (\$50,000 from CJF)

This planning grant would support a collaborative planning process by the National Institute for Fair Courts at Cardozo Law School, Soros Justice Fellow Amy Bach (author of *Ordinary Injustice*), the National Center for State Courts, and the Justice at Stake Campaign to create a “Justice Index.” Modeled on the Democracy Index that measures and compares electoral systems in the fifty states -- a national ranking system for state election-law practices, the Justice Index would collect and analyze data on state civil and criminal court systems by looking at criteria including access to counsel, language access, pre-trial detention and time from filing to verdict. In the planning process, the groups involved would assess the viability of creating such an index, work with stakeholders (including communities most negatively impacted by unfair, failing court systems) to determine what measurements should be included, and build a collaborative group that will both gather the data and use the Index to push for reform. As NCSC and JAS are already grantees of TIF, only the National Institute and Bach will receive grant funds for this planning process.

Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights Education Fund

General support (renewal), TIF contribution of \$300,000 over one year

TIF will provide \$300,000 to a D&P-initiated general support grant to LCCREF for the organization’s ongoing advocacy and organizing work around federal judicial nominations.