



THE CENTER
at Sierra Health Foundation

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR RACIAL EQUITY
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Find information about the Leadership Development for Racial Equity program at <http://www.shfcenter.org/ldre>.

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FUNDING FOCUS

Q: What is the focus of Leadership Development for Racial Equity funding?

A: This opportunity focuses on projects and activities designed to build organizational and leadership capacity to address issues of racial equity through advocacy and systems change. This round is open to youth-focus nonprofit organizations led by people of color and working to reduce health disparities.

The Center has a broad definition of health, believing that health is influenced by many factors, including socioeconomic conditions, environment, education, housing and income. These factors have come to be known as the Social Determinants of Health. Where we live, work and play has a significant influence on our health. Racial equity encompasses health equity.

Through Leadership Development for Racial Equity, The Center will fund activities related to organizational capacity building and leadership development to address issues of racial equity.

Q: Does The Center have a preference of population to be served by projects and activities funded through the Leadership Development for Racial Equity Program

A: For this opportunity, The Center will fund youth-focused organizations with a mission to serve racial and ethnic populations of color.

Q: What is the total amount of money available for this funding?

A: Up to \$100,000.

WHAT THE CENTER WILL FUND THROUGH THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR RACIAL EQUITY PROGRAM

Q: Can we apply for direct services?

A: No. We are interested in proposals to build organizational and leadership capacity to address racial equity through policy advocacy and systems change.

Q: Can an applicant apply for general operating support?

A: No. This funding opportunity is for specific long-term capacity building and/or leadership development activities.

Q: May our organization apply for funds to support capacity building and/or leadership development activities *not* listed in the application instructions?

A: Yes. The application instructions contain a list of examples of what funds may be used for. The Center encourages creative approaches based on promising practices and/or local innovation that address the priorities listed in the application instructions.

Q: Can administrative overhead be included in the request?

A: Yes, up to 15 percent of direct costs, which are items such as personnel, consultants and materials specific to the project or program for which funds are being requested, may be requested for indirect costs.

Q: What is meant by indirect costs?

A: Indirect costs are typically those costs that are not directly related to the project. They vary for each organization but are typically costs that are used to support the organization as a whole. Indirect costs include rent, utilities, administrative staff not dedicated to the program, equipment and services used by staff or other general costs. The person in your organization who handles finances will probably be able to answer that question for you

WHO CAN APPLY?

Q: Who is eligible to apply?

A: For this funding opportunity, The Center will fund nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and are designated as a 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2) organization.

Q: If our organization is not a 501(c)(3), may we still apply?

A: For this funding opportunity, only 501(c)(3) organizations may be the applicant organization. Non-501(c)(3) organizations may identify a 501(c)(3) organization to apply as their fiscal sponsor. The 501(c)(3) will be the applicant organization.

Q: We are a chapter of a larger organization; there is another chapter located in the funding region. Can each office submit an application?

A: Only one application per 501(c)(3) organization will be considered. If each chapter is a separate 501(c)(3) organization, each can submit an application.

Q: We are a nonprofit organization with subgroups in five counties. Can each subgroup apply?

A: No. Only one application per 501(c)(3) organization will be considered.

Q: Can city, county or other government agencies apply?

A: No. This funding opportunity is open to 501(c)(3) organizations only.

Q: Will The Center fund activities proposed by an organization in the process of applying for 501(c)(3) status?

A: Only applicant organizations that have a 501(c)(3) determination letter by the application deadline date are eligible to apply. Entities that do not have 501(c)(3) tax exempt status may use a fiscal sponsor as the applicant organization, as long as the fiscal sponsor is a qualifying 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Q: I understand The Center doesn't fund organizations with a 509(a)(3) designation. What is a 509(a)(3) organization?

A: A 509(a)(3) organization is a supporting organization established to support a nonprofit organization.

Example – XYZ Programs nonprofit organization decides to support a group of individuals that are working in an area that compliments their organization's mission. This work becomes known as ABC Services and operates as a project of XYZ Programs. Over time ABC Services grows and decides to file for tax exempt status so that it may receive some grants and donations directly. It is likely that ABC Services would be classified by the IRS as a 509(a)(3) supporting organization.

If your organization is identified as a 509(a)(3) supporting organization and you believe it should not be, contact the IRS at 1-877-829-5500. The IRS will assist you in the process to have your organization's tax status reconsidered.

Q: My 501(c)(3) organization is faith-based, and our service approach includes Christ-centered language. Are we eligible to apply?

A: The Center does not fund requests for activities that exclusively benefit the members of sectarian or religious organizations or if specific religious activities are required of participants.

Q: If our organization is currently funded by Sierra Health Foundation, The California Endowment, or The Center are we eligible to apply for this funding?

A: Yes.

FISCAL SPONSORS

Q: May we use a fiscal sponsor to apply on our behalf?

A: Yes. The fiscal sponsor must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or a public agency, and the proposed project must meet the funding opportunity criteria.

Q: Can a fiscal sponsor submit an application on behalf of more than one organization?

A: Yes. This is the one exception to the only-one-application-per-501(c)(3) organization rule.

ORGANIZATIONS LED BY PEOPLE OF COLOR

Q: How does The Center define organizations led by people of color?

A: For this funding opportunity, an organization managed by leaders of color is one:

- that has an explicit mission to serve racial and ethnic populations,
- in which at least half of its board of directors represent racial and ethnic minority populations, and
- in which key executive staff with policy- and decision-making authority represent racial and ethnic minority populations.

Q: Does an applicant organization need to meet all three of the above criteria to be eligible for this funding opportunity?

A: Yes.

Q: Does “represent racial and ethnic populations” mean that a board and its organization *serve* racial and ethnic populations or that key executive staff and half the board must *be* members of a racial or ethnic population?

A: By “represent racial and ethnic populations,” we mean that key executive staff and half the board are people of color. This is in addition to also having an explicit mission to serve people of color.

Q: Does The Center require that all of an applicant organization’s executive staff with policy- and decision-making authority represent racial and ethnic populations?

A: No, we do not require that 100% of the executive staff with policy- and decision-making authority be representative of racial and ethnic populations. In your application, describe the makeup of the executive staff.

Q: Do our organization's articles of incorporation or bylaws need to define the ethnicity of our organization's leadership?

A: No. You are asked to describe the racial/ethnic makeup of your organization's board and key executive staff with policy- and decision-making authority in your application narrative. However, if you have documentation to support your case, refer to it in your application narrative. Do not attach the bylaws or other documentation.

Q: Does our organization's mission need to state that the organization serves racial and ethnic populations?

A: No. Explain in your application narrative the population your organization serves. However, if your organization's mission does include a reference to the racial/ethnic population it serves, refer to it in your application narrative.

HOW TO APPLY

Q: Can each applicant organization submit more than one application?

A: Only one application per 501(c)(3) organization will be considered. However, an organization applying as a fiscal sponsor may apply as a fiscal sponsor for more than one non-501(c)(3) entity.

Q: Is The Center looking for collaborations?

A: We're not specifically looking for collaborations for this funding opportunity. This is an opportunity for your organization to build its capacity. To the extent collaboration makes sense to build the capacity of the applicant organization, collaborations are fine. Keep in mind only one organization can be the applicant organization.

Q: Can two organizations apply as partners?

A: Only one organization can be the applicant organization. In the application narrative, explain the reasoning behind the partnership in the context of this funding opportunity and make the case for it fitting the criteria and focus.

Q: Can an organization be mentioned as a partner in an application for a partnership and also apply as an organization independent of the partnership?

A: Yes.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Q: How much can we apply for?

A: You may apply for an amount from \$5,000 to \$10,000. We encourage applicants to apply for only the amount they need, up to \$10,000, to support their project.

Q: If an organization applies on behalf of a partnership and is funded, would each organization receive \$10,000 or would the partnership be awarded \$10,000 total?

A: The maximum grant amount is \$10,000, which would be awarded to the applicant organization as the grantee.

Q: Is there a required start date?

A: The start date is November 1, 2019.

Q: Is there a particular end date required?

A: The end date should be no earlier than August 31, 2020 and no later than October 31, 2020.

GEOGRAPHIC FUNDING AREA

Q: Will the funds be distributed to organizations across the eligible funding region?

A: Our goal is to have geographic distribution of funds to organizations with high-quality applications within the funding region.

Q: Will The Center only award funds to one organization per county?

A: The awards are not limited to one organization per county.

Q: My organization is located outside the eligible funding region, but serves within the eligible region. Are we eligible to apply?

A: Yes. We will consider funding organizations that serve people living in one or more of the counties in the funding region, even if the applicant organization is located outside the region. However, organizations with a presence and demonstrated significant impact in the funding region may be more competitive.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Q: How much detail should applicants provide for each application question? What are your preferred minimum and maximum pages?

A: Word limits are listed with each question. The portal will not allow more than the maximum number of words.

PROPOSED BUDGET

Q: Can we use our own budget form?

A: No. Use the budget form provided in the application. In the Attachments tab of the application, you will see a link to download the budget form.

Q: What does the Proposed Budget need to include?

A: The proposed budget needs to support all that you propose to do with Center funds, as described in your narrative.

Q: For Personnel, should applicants include the percentage of time each person will spend on the project?

A: Yes. Provide the full time equivalent (FTE) in the FTE column on the Proposed Project Budget form. For example, if a staff member will spend 25% of his or her time on the project, enter .25 on the FTE line in the Proposed Budget Form.

Q: Should we include in the proposed budget the cost of travel to the three grantee convenings?

A: You may include the cost of travel to the convenings. We recommend you budget for travel to all three convenings.

Q: Can administrative overhead be included in the request?

A: Yes, up to 15 percent of direct costs, which are items such as personnel, consultants and materials specific to the project or program for which funds are being requested, may be requested for indirect costs.

Q: What is meant by indirect costs?

A: Indirect costs are typically those costs that are not directly related to the project. They vary for each organization but are typically costs that are used to support the organization as a whole.

Indirect costs include rent, utilities, administrative staff not dedicated to the program, equipment and services used by staff or other general costs. The person in your organization who handles finances will probably be able to answer that question for you

Q: How should the line-item dollar amounts be listed?

A: For each item in your proposed budget, enter the total amount for the course of the funding period.

Q: Is there a budget limit on consultant fees or board stipends?

A: No. The only budget limitations are the total request amount and up to 15% for indirect costs.

Q: Can the other sources of funding be in-kind?

A: Yes. Explain secured in-kind resources in your Budget Narrative. In the Proposed Budget form, list other financial resources secured in the “Other Funding Committed to Project” column.

Q: If we are applying for funding from other sources but that funding is not secured, where do we indicate that?

A: Explain that in your Proposed Use of Funds answer.

Q: Should staff time that will be covered by the applicant organization’s internal funds be included in the Other Funding Secured for Activities column of the Proposed Budget form?

A: Yes.

Q: Should the *Requested from The Center* and the *Other Funding Committed* columns equal the *Total Project Budget* column?

A: Not necessarily. The Total Project Budget should reflect the total budget of the project. Only include other funding that has been committed to the project in the Other Funding column. If all of the other funding required for the project has not been committed, the *Requested from The Center* and the *Other Funding Committed* columns will not add up to the total project budget.

Q: Is there a page limit on the Budget Narrative?

A: The Budget Narrative is not limited to a certain number of pages. Use a reasonable amount of space to provide some detail on each line item.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Q: Are applicants required to submit an audited financial statement?

A: No. We require a financial statement showing your organization's revenue and expenses for the most recent full year. Although preferred, this does not need to be from an audited statement, if not available. If your organization does have an audited statement, we ask that you only submit the summary page(s) from the audited statement. We primarily want to get a sense of the size of your organization, revenue sources and expenses.

Q: Is there a specific 12-month time period the statement of financial activity should cover, e.g., January through December or July through June?

A: The statement of financial activity should cover your organization's fiscal year.

Q: Our organization received its 501(c)(3) status less than a year ago; may we submit a statement of financial activity that covers less than a year?

A: Submit a financial statement that covers your time of operation, up to one year.

Q: Will the financial report be taken into consideration when selecting organizations for funding?

A: If it is clear from the financial report that your organization is not financially sound, the proposal would be less likely to be funded than organizations in a sound financial situation.

Q: Because ours is a very small organization, we are not required to file a Form 990 with the IRS. Do we need to submit a financial statement with our application?

A: Yes. We are not asking for a Form 990. Please submit a financial statement showing revenue and expenses for a full year.

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

Q: If we submit an application early and realize we need to correct some information in the application, may we resubmit a revised application?

A: No. Only submit your application once. While we encourage early applications, we ask that you not submit your application until you are confident it is complete and accurate.

Q: May we submit letters of support or a memorandum of understanding with our application?

A: No. Only submit the items listed in the Application Attachments Checklist on page 7 of the [Application Instructions and Criteria](#). In the online grants portal, there is only space to upload and submit the documents listed in the checklist.

Q: May we submit our application by physical delivery, e.g., U.S. Mail or personal delivery?

A: No. Only applications submitted via the [online grants portal](#) will be accepted.

Q: What if we aren't able to submit our application through the online grants portal?

A: Send an e-mail to centergrants@shfcenter.org with the subject line "LDRE Online Help."

Q: May we get help with file formats such as Microsoft Word, Excel or PDF?

A: If you need help with file formats, send an e-mail to centergrants@shfcenter.org with the subject line: E-Mail Help. We strongly encourage you to request help before the deadline date so we can assist you before applications are due. We may not be able to respond to requests for help on the deadline date.

Q: When I try to access my in-progress application in the online grants portal, I don't see it and have to start a new application. What should I do?

A: When you click the "Save & Finish Later" button, you will receive an automated e-mail with a link to return to your in-progress application. Use this link each time to return to your application.

Q: If our 501(c)(3) determination letter is not in electronic form, should we send it via physical delivery?

A: No. Submit all required documents via the online grants portal. If your 501(c)(3) letter is not in electronic format, scan it and upload the resulting pdf file on the portal.

PROPOSAL REVIEW

Q: What is the application review process?

A: A review team reviews the applications based on the criteria listed in the application materials.

Q: Will you contact us if the reviewers have questions about our application?

A: It is possible.

Q: Will the application budget be judged on what is submitted or might a smaller amount be offered for funding?

A: For this program, we typically do not negotiate a smaller funding amount than has been requested. However, the project and the budget need to correspond. If it appears that an applicant has included line items as fillers to bring the total requested amount up to the maximum of \$10,000, we may offer a lesser amount that would more directly correspond with the proposed activities.

Q: Will those selected and those not selected for funding be notified?

A: Yes. We will notify the contact person listed in the application of the status of your application whether your organization is funded or not.

AFTER A GRANT IS AWARDED

Q: How will the award be paid?

A: The award will be paid in full at the beginning of the funding period.

Q: Can the funded organization keep interest earned on the award dollars?

A: Yes.

Q: When should the start date be?

A: The start date is November 1.

Q: What reporting is required of an organization receiving funding?

A: A final report of the funded activities, including a financial report showing how funds were spent, will be due 30 days after the funding agreement end date. Awarded organizations will report on the activities and outcomes in their proposals.

Q: Are organizations that receive funding required to attend the learning community convenings?

A: Yes. As part of the funding opportunity, funded organizations are required to be represented at the three convenings to contribute to a learning community. This is a requirement of the grant. The date of the first learning community convening is listed in the Application Instructions and Criteria.

Q: How long are these convening days and what would they entail?

A: Typically, learning community convenings begin at 9:00 a.m. with a light breakfast. The meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. and ends sometime between 3 and 4 p.m. Convenings consist of educational content as well as opportunities for grantee representatives to connect and network and to learn from each other. Past learning community topics have been:

- how to conduct an organizational assessment related to advocacy for policy and systems change
- communications to promote policy and systems change
- fund development for policy and systems change work
- finding solutions to real challenges encountered in systems change and racial equity work
- healing and self-care as components of strong and sustainable leaders, organizations and communities

Q: Will there be another Leadership Development for Racial Equity funding cycle in 2020?

A: There are no plans at this time for another LDRE funding cycle in 2020.

July 2019