



Questions and Answers from COO Black-led Systems and Policy Change Request for Proposals (RFP) Info Session: The below is information and follow-up to questions that were raised during the RFP Informational Session on September 22, 2020.

Question: Please provide examples of tools; specifically tools with regard to lobbying.

Tools can be thought of broadly – examples such as advocacy trainings, community surveys, focused community events for network building, organizing meetings and similar tactics, depending on what the planned outcomes of the work are.

Tools with regard to lobbying may mean, documenting meetings with elected officials to educate them on an issue or engaging them for a particular policy or legislative outcome. There is a template for tracking lobbying activities that we have created to support grantees:

Sample Tool for Tracking Lobbying Activities: [Lobbying Timesheet Tracker](#)

Question: It seems that in order to have the application open, potential applicants need to create an account and then start to fill in the application.

The questions and application requirements can be found on the landing page of the application portal site. We suggest that applicants draft their application in a word document prior to starting an account in the online application platform and then cut and paste answers into the platform once ready to submit your application. Online application portal:

https://seattlefoundation.smapply.org/prog/coo_black-led_program/

Question: Will we be able to access these slides or this recording after the zoom conference ends?

Yes, slides and the recording will be available on the COO and Seattle Foundation website.

Question: Could it [a proposal] just be to educate families in policies that affect them and generate ideas for solutions?

Possible; a proposal that is just education alone would not be the strongest fit, however, a proposal that supports education and mobilizing families to be engaged to develop the solutions to the problems that are impacting them may be a stronger fit.

Question: Can you please explain how to download questions on Word so I can have time to look over questions, due to grant [application] being digital?

There is not a button to download, but we recommend that you cut and paste the questions from the landing page or home page of the application into a word document. Landing page:

https://seattlefoundation.smapply.org/prog/coo_black-led_program/



Question: The application states organizations or individuals can apply. Please share more about what is meant by individuals.

We are only able to fund 501c3 organizations and are only funding partnerships between two or more organizations.

Question: Do you want us to categorically respond to those questions or will you accept our applying standard grant writing measures make sure we answer the questions in the process of developing the objectives of the Goal we will be setting?

The online application requires that you respond to each question in order.

Question: what does it mean or look like to have a 501c3 business sponsor you? I'm a small black woman owned business, but am for profit.

Typically, organizations that are fiscally sponsored are community coalitions or new community-based organizations that don't have IRS 501c3 tax status yet, and we contract with the fiscal sponsor who would manage payments, invoicing, and other operations on behalf of the lead applicant organization.

Question: Can organizations that are businesses in Washington state apply for this grant fund if they are fiscally sponsored by a 501c3 organization?

Yes, you are eligible to apply as a fiscally sponsored organization. Your fiscal sponsor will be responsible for tracking and ensuring your activities are compliant with their 501c3 status.

Question: Must applicants have an org budget of \$100k or more? It is my understanding that SF doesn't usually fund orgs with small budgets.

We do not have a minimum organizational budget size. For this funding we hope that there is a diversity of types and kinds of work that are funding.

We ask for organizational budgets because we want to understand whether your organization is in a fiscally healthy place and typically, we are looking to see if this funding would go to supporting outstanding debts or other costs not project related. Organizations may be carrying a negative debt, as long as they are still meeting the qualifications to achieve the proposed work.

Question: How are Black folks reviewing applications connected to the Black community...who are they accountable to?

We are trying to recruit a review committee that is diverse, while not including those who will be applying to the funding. We do not reveal the individuals who are on any review committees though they may self-disclose their participation on their own. This is in order to make sure that personal relationships do not impact the decisions of the committee. We are still recruiting for review committee members now.

Question: Please clarify. Does lead applicant need to be 501c3 - More Clarity on 501C3 and current COO partners.



Current COO funded partners can be found here: <https://www.coopartnerships.org/partners>

Yes, lead applicants must be 501c3s (or have a 501c3 fiscal sponsor).

Question: Please explain what it means to have a fiscal sponsor that qualifies as a nonprofit 501c3 organization and if there is a threshold in how long an organization has been a 501c3. Can the lead organization be a non-profit identified by Washington State, with pending 501c3 status? Does a fiscal sponsor have authority to change the status of the partner or subcontracted organizations since the contract is made with them?

Lead applicants **must have 501c3 status at the time of funding** (or have a 501c3 fiscal sponsor). The Seattle Foundation can only contract with 501c3's. The IRS process to establish 501c3 status may take a long time and it is unlikely that status would be confirmed by January, if applying for 501c3 status now.

If your organization is identified by the State of Washington as a non-profit (or as a tax-exempt religious nonprofit or a 501c4) but does not have 501c3 status, you are not eligible to be the lead applicant for this funding. The Seattle Foundation is legally limited to funding 501c3 organizations only. **However**, we do not want this to be a barrier, and if you have additional questions about 501c3 status, please contact **Dionne Foster**, d.foster@seattlefoundation.org

Question: To clarify, if they are the fiscal partner could they say you're no longer a partner. I'm aware of a similar situation where there was a fiscal sponsor and partnership and the sponsor reduced the amount to one of the partners and made it an independent contract relationship. That they could exercise because they were the fiscal sponsor, but the relationship didn't start off that way. What recourse would I have?

It is important that there is a documented structure and terms of agreement to a fiscal sponsorship relationship. We do not typically document the terms of a fiscal sponsorship relationship, but document the terms of the grant program, grant agreement and proposed workplan. The fiscal sponsorship relationship should be clear and agreed upon between your organization and your fiscal sponsor, and we encourage you to document those agreements. This is something that we could potentially talk through during the contracting process, in order to see if folks are feeling vulnerable in their fiscal sponsorship relationship.

Question: if you get/have a fiscal sponsor, does this give them the authority to change the partnerships because the contract is in their name?

You would establish your own relationship with a fiscal sponsor, and we do not dictate the terms of that relationship, that must be determined by you and the fiscal sponsor and can look a number of different ways.

Communities Rise is one organization that can provide support and education around fiscal sponsorship relationships: <https://communities-rise.org/nonprofit-cbo-services/legal-services-apply/>



Question: Can new collectives/coalitions running on sweat equity with no budget other than volunteer time apply? Would they have a chance?

Essentially, could this be an organization's first grant? In effect, yes. What we'll be looking for is -- does your organization have existing relationships and a history of doing work in and with community? It may be that your organization is newer or has not been grant supported before, but you're able to demonstrate successfully the organization's connectedness to community and history of work and relationships for review committee members.

There are 3 attachments that we request you upload for submission:

- Project Budget – Please use the provided budget template (available through the online submissions portal)
- Diversity Template – Please use the provided template, this is only a portion of how we consider organizational identity (available through the online submissions portal)
- Organizational budget for “lead” applicant only.

Deadlines & Decisions:

- Submissions are online only. Deadline is October 27
- The Community Review Committee will include Black staff from Seattle Foundation, Communities of Opportunity (COO) and Black community members unaffiliated with Seattle Foundation and COO.
- There may be virtual site visits/interviews requested the week of December 4th (by invitation only)
- We anticipate this will be a highly competitive process with many more applications than we have funding for.
- Final decisions should be made in mid-December

There are two Drop-in Question & Answer Sessions on:

- October 7 from 11am - 12 pm
Register to attend here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/121271021891>
- October 23 from 11am - 12 pm
Register to attend here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/121271954681>

Questions can be sent to Dionne Foster, d.foster@seattlefoundation.org, please include “COO BLO” in the email title.