Granting Criteria

*This document is a tool to assist you, the grant reviewer, in your evaluation of grant proposals. Each section corresponds to a criteria category on which you will be asked to "rate" each proposal, by answering the "overall question" for each of the criteria. Sub questions are listed under each overall question to assist you, but you do not need to answer every sub question for every proposal. **This is not a checklist**, but a road map to help guide you through this process.*

PROGRAM

<u>Overall Question:</u> **Will the proposed work help build concrete and lasting political power to address the underlying causes of the problems that it addresses?**

STRONG (deserves high score)		WEAK (deserves low score)
Will the proposed work build concrete and lasting political and economic power?	…Or…	Are the goals and objectives likely to create only temporary change?
Does the group understand the root causes and underlying power dynamics of the identified need or problem?	…Or…	Does the organization identify the need and its symptoms without addressing the root cause or power dynamic giving rise to the need?
Does the proposed work address root causes, challenge existing institutions, and/or advocate for policy reform?	…Or…	Does the proposed program work to relieve needs and symptoms without linking the work to broader systemic change?
If self-empowerment is a part of the organization's strategy, is it a step towards building power for disenfranchised or marginalized communities?	…Or…	Is individual empowerment separate from community organizing or collective action, or unlikely to assist a movement for social change?
Will the proposed work help build a democratic and diverse movement for social change?	…Or…	Will the outcome of the proposed work feed into the existing social, political and economic power structure?
Are the goals and objectives clear and, where possible, measurable?	…Or…	Are goals and objectives vague or confused?
Is there a detailed and complete work plan?	…Or…	Are proposed activities vague or incomplete?
Is the work plan designed to accomplish the stated goals and objectives?	…Or…	Are the proposed activities unrelated to the proposed goals and objectives or insufficient to make concrete progress towards those ends?
Are the goals and objectives achievable? Is the work plan feasible?	…Or…	Is the proposed work too ambitious or otherwise unreasonable?
Does the organization provide a plan to collect data and clear criteria to effectively evaluate its measurable objectives? Will the organization thoughtfully review broader, less easily measured goals?	…Or…	Does the organization appear unsure about how to measure the impact of its work?
Does the proposal clearly designate responsibility for program evaluation?	…Or…	Is it unclear who will conduct evaluation or appear that evaluation will not happen?
Is there a clear mechanism for incorporating evaluation results into ongoing or future work?	…Or…	Does it appear that evaluation results will be irrelevant to ongoing or future work?

DIVERSITY

Does the organization:

1) work with communities that are exploited, oppressed, or marginalized?

3) include members of these communities in the decision-making leadership of the organization?

4) work to build a multi-racial, multi-class, multi-gendered social justice movement?

STRONG (deserves high score)		WEAK (deserves low score)
Does the organization represent and/or benefit historically disenfranchised and/or underrepresented communities?	…Or…	Does the organization only represent and benefit communities who have historically had institutionalized privilege? Does the organization claim to benefit disenfranchised and/or underrepresented communities without including representation from those communities?
Do most of the individuals in positions of leadership in the organization come from historically disenfranchised and/or underrepresented communities?	…Or…	Do most of the individuals in leadership come from communities who have historically had institutionalized privilege? If people from disenfranchised and/or underrepresented communities are in leadership, do they appear to be tokens?
Does a significant percentage of individuals in positions of leadership in the organization come from the specific constituency most directly affected by the issues the organization is working on?	…Or…	Do most of the individuals in leadership come from communities not directly affected by those issues? If people from the affected communities are in leadership, do they appear to be tokens?
If a significant percentage of individuals in positions of leadership in the organization do not come from historically disenfranchised, underrepresented, and/or affected communities, is there a concrete plan and timeline for increasing the diversity of the leadership?	…Or…	Does the organization fail to acknowledge that it has room to increase the diversity of its leadership or minimize the problem? If it does acknowledge the problem, does it only state an intent to improve without a clear and realistic plan for how it will improve?
Does the organization articulate and demonstrate a commitment to building a multi-racial, multi-class, multi-gendered progressive movement (e.g. by dismantling/bridging the divides of racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, etc.)?	…Or…	Does the organization lack a clear commitment to, or articulation of, the importance of building a multi-racial, multi-class, multi-gendered progressive movement, or of dismantling the "isms?"

SOUNDNESS

Overall Question: **Does the organization have the internal capacity and systems to sustain it as a strong, lasting organization?**

STRONG (deserves high score)		WEAK (deserves low score)
Does the organization have a track record of success in mobilizing their constituency on political issues?	…Or…	Does the organization lack a focus or strategy in mobilizing their base?
Does the organization have a clear and specific sense of its mission?	…Or…	Does the organization seem to lack a sense of what its mission is?
Is the organization's work well distributed among staff, volunteers and board members?	…Or…	Is this a "one-person show?"
Is there an active Board of Directors or Steering Committee that has final authority over policy and program decisions?	…Or…	Does the Board of Directors or Steering Committee seem not to be very involved?
Do volunteers and/or new members have clear opportunities to develop leadership skills and to move into positions of power in the organization?	…Or…	Is the organization controlled by a small group of people who do not let new members into the decision-making structure?
Is the organization's volunteer leadership stable?	…Or…	Have there been frequent changes in volunteer leadership in recent years?
Are the organization's sources of revenue diverse and stable?	…Or…	Is the organization overly dependent on a few sources of funding?
Are volunteers (including the Board of Directors) actively involved in fundraising?	…Or…	Is the fundraising relegated only to staff or a small group of volunteers?
Are fundraising plans realistic and achievable?	…Or…	Does the organization seem overly optimistic in its ability to raise/increase its income?
Is the organization able to retain experienced staff? Does the organization provide a workplace conducive to good staff retention (e.g. respectable salaries/wages for the area, benefits, family friendly policies, budget for professional development)?	…Or…	Is there frequent staff turnover? Does the organization offer a workplace likely to result in high turnover (e.g. huge salary disparities between higher and lower status employees, unrealistic workloads, top-down management style)?
Are there clear roles for Board and staff?	…Or…	Do the Board and staff seem to be at odds, unclear of their respective roles?
Are there clear systems and roles for managing the organization's finances (including periodic budgeting and financial reporting procedures)?	…Or…	Do the finances of the organization seem loosely managed, with unclear authority or systems?

COLLABORATION

Overall Question: **Does the organization demonstrate a commitment to collaboration, partnership, and/or networking as an approach to social change?**

STRONG (deserves high score)		WEAK (deserves low score)
Does the organization see collaboration and partnerships as important strategies for building a social change movement?	…Or…	Does the organization see itself as capable of winning its issues and agenda by going it alone?
Are efforts to collaborate part of a long-term commitment to build a broad winning progressive movement?	…Or…	Are collaboration efforts short-term tactics that are likely to be abandoned once a particular objective has been achieved?
Do the organization's collaborative relationships cross issue and constituency boundaries?	…Or…	Does the group only collaborate with organizations working on the same issues and with the same constituencies?

LACK OF ACCESS

Overall Question: **Does the organization have access to more mainstream funding to support this work?**

STRONG (deserves high score)		WEAK (deserves low score)
Is the work of this organization too "controversial" to be likely to receive "mainstream" funding?	…Or…	Is this organization's work likely to be able to be funded by more "mainstream" foundations because it is not controversial?
Is this organization likely to face barriers of resources, networking, education, language, or culture in appealing to "mainstream" funders?	…Or…	Does this organization have the savvy, expertise, resources, or contacts that will help it obtain more "mainstream" funding?