Hawai‘i People’s Fund Urgent Action Grantmaking
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

❖ Are we eligible to apply?
Be sure to carefully review the Funding Guidelines before writing a grant proposal. We also encourage you to call or email the office in advance to discuss your plans and see if it is a good fit.

❖ Our project is in direct response to the COVID-19 crisis. Is the UAG right for us?
Hawai‘i People’s Fund is committed to supporting grassroots organizations working to reduce the harm of current systemic failures, and welcomes strategic proposals that aim to support our beloved community during these unprecedented times.

Hawai‘i People’s Fund believes the work of our grantees present VIABLE SOLUTIONS to the current crisis, and despite the challenges that COVID-19 has presented, we choose to use this time as our chance to usher in a new way of living, loving, and being a part of something bigger than ourselves.

With business-as-usual crumbling, be assured that Hawai‘i People’s Fund stands in solidarity with those individuals and organizations who have been working to upend and heal systems of oppression for nearly 50 years. THE HULI IS HERE.

We understand that low-income families, houseless communities, service workers, people with disabilities, people who are incarcerated, indigenous, immigrant, and communities of color are disproportionately impacted by the crisis (in addition to ongoing systemic oppression).

Community organizing is essential at this moment to counter racism and xenophobia, and to provide new models of care and ensure our most vulnerable communities can stay safe.

Examples of projects/responses can include:

- Participatory mutual aid projects serving vulnerable communities (food justice, kupuna care, childcare)
- Building solidarity economies
- Community centered indigenous, traditional healing and medicine
- Anti-racist & anti-discrimination work
- Sick leave and family leave funds & Improving sick leave and family leave policies
- Organizing for safe and healthy workplaces (strikes, work stoppages)
- Organizing against evictions, utility shut offs, ICE and immigration enforcement
- Organizing for decarceration (early release for nonviolent low level offenses, ending cash bail)

To accommodate real-time response to community needs, the Hawai‘i People’s Fund will make the following special considerations to those responding to COVID-19 related issues:

- Mutual aid and grassroots organizing projects without a fiscal sponsor or bank account may propose alternative means for accepting and managing funds.
- Current grantees or grantees within the last 3 years may seek funds for continuity of operations if they are facing serious financial challenges due to COVID-19.
- Committee will take all efforts to expedite review and make determinations within a week of receipt.

UAG Frequently Asked Questions
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What is social change?
Social change organizing is inclusive and collective work that addresses the root causes of problems and works for long-term, sustainable alternatives. Please review the Funding Guidelines for a more detailed explanation.

An appropriate parable tells of a man walking along a river when he hears shouting, “help us save the babies!” Below at the riverbank are many of the community people frantically pulling babies out of the water. The man takes off running and someone calls to him, “where are you going? Come help us get the babies out of the river!” The man responds, “I’m going to the head of the river to stop who is throwing them in!”

Of course, saving those babies is an urgent need and will take the labor of most of the community to achieve. However, unless the root cause is directly addressed, the problem will continue. This is why the tagline for Hawai‘i People’s Fund is Change, not Charity™.

What issue areas are funded?
The broad categories of work that Hawai‘i People’s Fund supports include:

- Action Research
- Arts & Cultural Activism
- Cross-Issue Organizing
- Human and Civil Rights
- Environmental Justice
- Economic Justice
- Grassroots Leadership
- Political Organizing
- Peace and International Solidarity
- Movement Building
- Youth Organizing
- Public Policy Advocacy
- Workers’ Rights
- Indigenous Rights
- Reproductive Justice
* Work that supports the communities building real time solutions in the aforementioned issue areas during the COVID-19 crisis.

Priority will be given to grants that support nonviolent direct action: the strategic use of immediately effective acts to achieve a political or social goal and challenge an unjust power dynamic or system. Direct action can shut things down, open things up, pressure a target, intervene in a system, re-imagine what’s possible, create an alternative, and be led by and empower directly impacted people.

Grants are NOT to be used for ongoing program work with unanticipated expenses, one time events not connected to ongoing social change organizing strategies, or seed funding for new projects (see our regular grants program for upcoming deadlines). This Fund is not for budget shortfalls or cash flow issues. We will not fund travel to conferences outside of Hawai‘i. Please note the special accommodations described in the COVID-19 response section above.

Do we need to have a 501c3 tax-exempt nonprofit organization? What is a fiscal sponsor? When is a fiscal sponsor required?
If a group’s mission is eligible for funding, you do not need to be approved by the IRS as 501c3. However, if there is no financial account in the name of your organization, a fiscal sponsor or a designated Project representative’s personal account information is required.

A fiscal sponsor is an organization with 501c(3) status, a designation with the IRS allowing that entity to receive tax-deductible donations. A fiscal sponsor will partner with you to receive and distribute your grant funding. Note that most fiscal sponsors will charge a percentage for this service and will offer varying levels of support. Please keep in mind that we do NOT fund individuals.
Exceptions may be made for applicants responding to the COVID-19 crisis.

❖ **Who reads the grant applications? Who decides which proposals are funded?**
The Urgent Action Grantmaking Committee reads the applications and makes a decision regarding funding proposals. The UAGC is made up of members of the Hawai‘i People’s Fund Board of Directors and Grantmaking Committee. It is comprised of your peers, people who are working/have worked for social justice and social change in Hawai‘i.

❖ **When will we learn if our group was awarded a grant?**
Applicants responding to the COVID-19 crisis will be notified of award within one week of receipt of all application requirements. We will respond to all other requests within 2-3 weeks of receipt.

❖ **Why is a proposal chosen for a grant?**
Hawai‘i People’s Fund’s Urgent Action Grants support grassroots, social justice organizations in Hawai‘i facing unforeseen, urgent threats, critical junctures in organizing, breaking opportunities or shifts in political landscape, that critically affect their organization and constituency. This fund is intended to help organizations achieve a timely and specific outcome or impact within 3-6 months, usually as part of a long term goal to achieve systems-based change.

The Funding Guidelines lay out all the elements that are looked at and looked for in your proposal. Please review the grant application procedures carefully. A complete application will help the UAGC make their decision. An application should be succinct and clear about its goals, objectives and intentions in how you will work towards making progressive social change in Hawai‘i.

A clear description of the strategies that are/will be used for action is critical. The UAGC will be looking at the commitment to leadership development and diversity. Work that is inclusive and empowering rather than providing services is prioritized.

❖ **How much money can we receive and/or ask for?**
The maximum request is **$5,000**. We expect the amount to be an honest reflection of need as reflected in a well-prepared budget.

❖ **Where does the grant money come from?**
Hawai‘i People’s Fund is a community-based public foundation. All money for grants is raised primarily from community members, and in part from other foundations that support grassroots activism for social change. In addition to supporting organizations, we are building a stronger sector of progressive philanthropy.

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