Hawai‘i People’s Fund 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.

❖ 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

❖ When is your grant deadline?
Whether submitting an application online or in hardcopy, proposals must be received by **11:59pm on April 30, 2021**.

**We strongly encourage you to complete the application before the due date to ensure adequate time for follow up requests for additional information. Late applications will not be considered.**

❖ Will you accept our proposal if it’s postmarked on the deadline?
We will only accept paper applications postmarked with the date of deadline for applicants who reside on and operate from a Neighbor Island.

❖ 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 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.
❖ Who reads the grant applications? Who decides which proposals are funded?

The Grantmaking Committee reads the applications and makes a decision regarding funding proposals. The Grantmaking Committee is made up of activists, grassroots community people who may have been Hawai‘i People’s Fund grantees previously and members of the Hawai‘i People’s Fund Board. It is comprised of your peers, people who have worked for social justice and social change in Hawai‘i.

The Grantmaking Committee deliberates, discusses and recommends which grant proposals will receive funding. The Hawai‘i People’s Fund Board of Directors has the final approval of these recommendations. Applicants seeking funding for urgent, short-term work, especially to support organized direct action, should consider applying for an Urgent Action Grant.

❖ When will we learn if our group was awarded a grant?

You will receive a response from a grant proposal within 60 days.

❖ Why is a proposal chosen for a grant?

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 Grantmaking Committee 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.

Because the Grantmaking Committee will read many applications during the grant cycle, it is important that the proposal gives a broad picture of your group’s work and is specific about the intended use of the resources that Hawai‘i People’s Fund can offer.

A clear description of the strategies that are/will be used for action is critical. The grants panel 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 $10,000. We expect the amount to be an honest reflection of need as reflected in a well-prepared budget. If a project or organization needs $67,000, then a request for $10,000 might make sense. If $6,700 is the total needed, a request for $10,000 does not make sense.

❖ Can HPF grant funds be used for general operating expenses?

Yes, community-led organizations whose work is exclusively dedicated to pursuing social justice in Hawai‘i may apply for a grant to cover personnel, administrative costs, rent, and other general operating costs. Such applicants shall include an updated Organizational Budget, and a corresponding Budget Narrative detailing how funds will be used to pursue the social justice objectives described in your application proposal narrative.

❖ 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.

Hawai‘i People’s Fund
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