

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

## Request for Proposals for Impact & Innovation Grants

### Open Society Foundations U.S. Drug Policy Project

#### Vision and Purpose

The Open Society Foundations U.S. Programs Drug Policy Project aims to support viable alternatives to mass criminalization and mass incarceration as a response to drug use, addiction related behaviors, sex work, and subsistence driven trade, and to strengthen proactive community-driven health services and provide resources for interventions made prior to or instead of arrests. Open Society grant making will support equitable and high-quality pre-arrest and pre-booking diversion programs that reduce arrests and incarceration and provide participants with effective harm-reduction interventions shown to improve the health and safety of individuals and community well-being.

To maximize the impact and effectiveness of the proposed models and to support grantees in achieving their outcomes, the Drug Policy Project is soliciting proposals for the **Impact & Innovation Grant Fund (max grant size \$75,000)**. The Impact & Innovation Grant Fund will support established arrest diversion programs to access technical assistance from top diversion and harm reduction experts in order to demonstrate and measure their impact and improve the quality of their interventions. We invite grant proposals from organizations/agencies seeking consultation and technical assistance support from one of four pre-qualified technical assistance providers: Community Catalyst, the Haywood Burns Institute, LEAD National Bureau, and Pathways to Housing.

*[Please note: Open Society Foundations' RFP process is entirely independent from the Equity & Inclusion MicroGrants funded by the Criminal Justice Initiative of Solidago Foundation. The competitions are announced simultaneously to support effective community planning. The Micro-Grant application and selection process are managed by CJI and a circle of activists and survivors of the war on drugs. Different deadlines apply. For more information, please visit [www.diversionhub.org](http://www.diversionhub.org).]*

***This Request for Proposals is not a commitment of funds. No grants will be issued under this solicitation until availability of funds.***

### KEY DATES (visit [www.diversionhub.org](http://www.diversionhub.org) for details)

**Oct. 13:** RFP Release Date

**Oct. 16, 2017–Jan. 15, 2018:** TA providers available for consultation and planning

**Nov. 1:** Zoom Video Q&A for applicants

**Dec. 1:** Application submission open via [Open Society Foundations](#)

**Feb. 1, 2018: FINAL DEADLINE** to submit application via [Open Society Foundations](#)

**Mar. 1–Apr. 1:** Open Society Foundations interview and select final grantees

**May 1, 2018–Apr. 30, 2020:** Funding period

**May 1, 2019 & Aug. 1, 2020:** Reporting deadlines

## Core Values

“[Harm reduction](#)” refers to a range of services and policies that reduce the adverse consequences of drug use, sex trade practices, and other risky behaviors and protect public health. A harm reduction approach involves giving people who use drugs or engage in higher risk health behaviors choices that can help them protect their health and reduce risks to their communities. Services that are informed by a harm reduction approach do not threaten or withhold resources, or otherwise treat program participants adversely or punitively, because of their behaviors or choices. The success of harm reduction strategies is measured through clinical, social, and economic outcomes and quality of life for the individual and the community. We at the Open Society Foundations are committed to supporting programs and policy changes that move our society further along the spectrum of reducing the harms of risky behaviors and the legal system itself. The criminalization of drug use and prostitution and responses by criminal justice actors often increase the harm caused to people who are vulnerable and can interfere with access to public health benefits, rights, and protections. We encourage applicants to develop a local dialogue among key stakeholders to identify shared interests and to create alternatives to criminalization and arrests for sex work, drug use, or other risk-laden behaviors.

The Impact & Innovation Grants selection process will prioritize proposals that demonstrate authentic and equitable community engagement strategies where directly affected populations are involved in the co-design, implementation, and evaluation of harm reduction and diversion initiatives. Open Society will prioritize funding for interventions that are informed by data on

specific populations entering local justice systems through partnerships with academic, governmental, non-profit, consumer, advocacy, research, and other stakeholders. Open Society will support interventions that seek to divert populations traditionally ineligible for diversion such as individuals deemed 'high risk' or charged with felony or aggravated crimes. Open Society understands that successful diversion programs will need to secure a formal diversion agreement between community providers and police (jail administration or prosecutors if pre-booking). Open Society is interested in proposals that seek to build or strengthen such working relationships. Finally, Open Society seeks to support interventions that engage participants in effective diversion and harm reduction programming, leadership development, housing with supports and programs seeking to develop, measure, or secure certification of new best practices or evidence-informed interventions.

### Who Is Eligible to Apply

Applications for Impact & Innovation Grants will only be accepted from organizations and entities that (1) are currently collaborating on an active arrest diversion program, or wish to shift a pre-adjudication or pre-booking program into an earlier intervention prior to arrest; **AND** (2) are ready to access the services of technical assistance experts to meet specifically identified areas of needed improvement. Proposals should be responsive to community needs, and should be well thought out with a clear set of goals that can be achieved during the two-year grant cycle.

- Applications will be accepted from nonprofit organizations of all sizes (including advocacy groups and social service providers), public agencies, and federally recognized Native American and Indian tribal governments
- Individuals and single-person LLCs are NOT eligible.
- Entities applying for grants above \$25,000 must demonstrate additional funds committed for the pre-arrest or arrest diversion program, allocated by the start of the funding period. *Special exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis.*
- Grantees of the Open Society U.S. Programs Drug Policy Project are not eligible to apply if already receiving funding for any portion of this funding cycle (starting May 1, 2018).

Grantees (and applicants) of Solidago Foundation's Criminal Justice Initiative Micro-grants are still eligible to apply for this funding.

### How Can My Organization Use the Impact & Innovation Grant Funds?

Impact & Innovation Grant funds must be used to achieve one or more of the following outcomes:

- Programs divert those who face the greatest risk of incarceration for substantial periods of time, including those who do not qualify for, or have been underrepresented in, traditional pre-adjudication diversion programs.
- Programs energize critical stakeholders to innovate, apply heightened standards and remove institutional barriers to success
- Programs are aligned with harm reduction principles, operate with fidelity to evidence-informed health practices, and empower peer-led, and community-driven resource interventions.

- Programs develop and promote mechanisms for sustainable service coverage and funding for interventions.

Proposals will be evaluated based upon the applicants' ability to advance project outcomes and to demonstrate the impact of the selected technical service by the conclusion of the funding period.

The majority of funding must be used for technical assistance contracts with pre-approved TA providers. Approximately 60-70% of the grant funds should be used to access the services of the four pre-screened technical assistance providers described below. The remaining budget may be allocated to overhead costs (staff time for meetings, training, integration, etc.) and direct costs (staff salaries, travel, meetings) necessary for organizational partnership with the TA provider.

### What Supports Can I Get from the Pre-Approved Technical Assistance Experts?

The Impact & Innovation Grants will fund community based arrest diversion programs in pursuing the desired outcomes by supporting grantees' engagement with a core group of national technical assistance (TA) experts. Applicants should indicate which TA partner they wish to engage and for what specific support.

The following technical service providers have extensive experience with integrating harm reduction approaches within pre-arrest or pre-bookings diversion programming and measuring impact to ensure diversion is benefitting the populations most directly impacted by mass incarceration and the war on drugs. Each of these organizations has extensive expertise in a number of areas; the available TA services described below reflect their areas of focus for the purpose of the Impact & Innovation Grants portfolio.

**Community Catalyst:** ([www.communitycatalyst.org](http://www.communitycatalyst.org)) Community Catalyst is a national advocacy organization dedicated to advancing health justice by empowering consumers and communities to help make the health system more responsive, effective and equitable using strategies of policy analysis, strategic communications, grassroots organizing, coalition building, issue campaigns and resource development.

- **Available TA Services:** Community Catalyst is available to help build the capacity of projects to advocate effectively for their programs with policymakers and health system stakeholders. This includes engaging health plans and health care providers in offering culturally competent pre-arrest diversion services, and developing sustainable funding streams within the health system.
- Contact: Alice Dembner, ([adembner@communitycatalyst.org](mailto:adembner@communitycatalyst.org))

**Haywood Burns Institute:** ([www.burnsinstitute.org](http://www.burnsinstitute.org)) The Burns Institute eliminates racial and ethnic disparity by building a community-centered response to provide alternatives to detention that are equitable and restorative. We facilitate a collaborative environment where community and system stakeholders strategically use data to reduce racial and ethnic disparities; and support capacity

building of families and organizations to redirect resources to community-based interventions, thus reducing system involvement.

- **TA Services Available:** The Burns Institute (BI) is available to help tailor diversion programs toward specific reductions in racial and ethnic disparities. The BI can consult on building working partnerships between criminal justice systems and community based organizations toward creating effective diversion processes and programs. Burns Institute can also support the creation of embedded leadership development opportunities inside diversion programming.
- Contact: Malachi Garza, [mgarza@burnsinstitute.org](mailto:mgarza@burnsinstitute.org)

**LEAD National Support Bureau:** ([www.leadbureau.org](http://www.leadbureau.org)) Staffed by individuals who have designed, implemented, and evaluated successful police diversion programs in the field, including in Seattle's flagship LEAD program and the Albany NY LEAD program, the LEAD National Support Bureau works to support and implement core principles for sustainable, transformative police diversion practices that advance racial equity, improve participant well-being, and meet neighborhood public safety needs.

- **TA Services Available:** The LEAD National Support Bureau is available to support and improve (1) project management, (2) the coordination of engagement with prosecutorial partners and law enforcement, (3) harm reduction-based case management, and (4) engagement with community public safety groups.
- Contact: Lisa Daugaard, [lisa.daugaard@defender.org](mailto:lisa.daugaard@defender.org)

**Pathways to Housing:** ([www.pathwaystohousingdc.org](http://www.pathwaystohousingdc.org)) Pathways to Housing DC is an organization dedicated to transforming individual lives by ending homelessness and supporting recovery for people with psychiatric disabilities and addiction through the Housing First program. Housing First is founded on principles of consumer choice and self-determination, prioritizes the provision of immediate access permanent supportive housing as a matter of right, and serves as a platform for the provision of support and treatment to pursue personal goals and improve quality of life. Pathways to Housing is an Assertive Community Treatment provider.

- **TA Services Available:** Pathways to Housing is available to assist projects interested in establishing or deepening “housing first” programs, in the context of either an independent program or of a community-wide approach for homeless services. Pathways is able to provide training and implementation support in the following areas: (1) the “housing first” program model, (2) identification of potential funding streams for housing and case management, (3) certification and (3) communication strategies to educate other providers, government agencies, community landlords, and communities about the effectiveness of “housing first” initiatives.
- Contact: Christy Respress, [crespress@pathwaysdc.org](mailto:crespress@pathwaysdc.org)

### Application Process and Grants Timeline

Applicants may submit proposals for one-time grants up to a maximum of \$75,000. All requests above \$25,000 require demonstration of a commitment of at least \$25,000 in the budget from another source of funding. Applications will be accepted beginning on December 1, 2017. The final deadline for submitting applications is February 1, 2018. Selected grantees will be notified and interviewed between March and April of 2018. Grantees will receive one-time grants to be expended within 24 months. Grantees will submit financial and narrative progress reports at the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter and a final report within 60 days after expiration of funding.

As you prepare your application, we encourage you to take the following steps:

#### ***STEP ONE (RECOMMENDED): COMPLETE ASSESSMENT WORKSHEETS (APPENDIX A)***

The **Priorities Assessment** and the **Readiness and Capacity Assessment** worksheets are designed to assist applicants in preparing to consult with technical assistance (TA) partners about potential work plans. We encourage you to complete the Priorities Assessment worksheet first, using it to identify your top priorities in terms of outcomes and interventions. After you have identified one to five top priorities, you should move on to corresponding sections of the Readiness and Capacity Assessment worksheet to identify and explore your current needs more deeply.

**Please note:** These worksheets are a tool for applicants to use internally and then share with potential TA provider partners for your discussion and planning conversations. We respect that to do the critical work of identifying needs and finding solutions, applicants must feel comfortable being fully transparent about strengths, weaknesses, potential for progress, and barriers. In order to avoid any concern about how your honest self-assessments might impact your application, **these worksheets are not part of the grant application and should not be shared with Open Society Foundations.** Open Society encourages you to be completely open and honest; again, these worksheets will not be part of your application, will not be shared with the Open Society Foundations (by applicants or by TA providers), and will not have any impact on decision-making about the grant awards.

#### ***STEP TWO (RECOMMENDED): CONSULT WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS***

With the worksheets completed, we encourage you to reach out to the TA provider(s) who may best meet your needs, sharing the worksheets with them and discussing if and how you might work together using the Impact & Innovation Grant funds. Reach out directly to the TA provider(s) for their input and to gain information necessary to finalize the details of your budget and proposal. Technical service providers are available to assist by reviewing applicants' assessment worksheets, sharing more about their services, and discussing timing and compensation. Open Society aims to match localities with the best fit of technical services supports.

Applicants are encouraged to consider and talk with more than one potential TA provider partner. We recognize that we may receive many applications requesting support from each TA provider. Ultimately, each successful applicants will receiving funding to work with just one of the TA providers. If an applicant is open to working with more than one potential partner, the applicant may submit an application reflecting your first choice of TA support partner (with corresponding work plan and budget); and then indicate a second potential TA provider in order to maximize opportunities for partnership.

#### ***STEP THREE (REQUIRED): COMPLETE IMPACT & INNOVATION APPLICATION FORM (APPENDIX B)***

Once you have identified your desired outcome(s), preferred technical assistance provider, and work plan, you must complete the full application (see APPENDIX B). The completed application and all attachments must be submitted as a single package to the Open Society Foundations between December 1, 2017 and February 1, 2018. [DETAILS ON SUBMISSION via website or email]

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: ASSESSMENT WORKSHEETS (SEE SEPARATE DOCUMENT)

### APPENDIX B: IMPACT & INNOVATION APPLICATION FORM (SEE SEPARATE DOCUMENT)

### APPENDIX C: DEFINITIONS

In pursuing our collaboration, it is important that we, in the context of this RFP, utilize a consistent set of terminology to help measure progress achieving core principles of this work.

- **Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)** is an evidence-based service-delivery model that provides comprehensive, locally based treatment to people with serious and persistent mental illnesses. ACT operates from a “whatever it takes” philosophy and services are provided “in-vivo”.
- **Racial equity** is the condition that would be achieved if one’s racial identity was no longer a predictor of one’s outcomes; that every person would be given what they need to enjoy a full and healthy life.
- **Directly impacted communities** refers to groups of people with some thread of commonality, who are disproportionately exposed to environmental or social factors that negatively impact that community’s well-being directly and/or indirectly. Within this RFP, the community referenced are those most directly impacted law enforcement’s role in the war on drugs including active and former drug users, homeless individuals, street-based sex workers and other survivors of incarceration.
- **Equitable community engagement** ensures that the impacted community is directly involved in the design, operationalization and monitoring of any/all solutions to problems that are impacting said community. An equitable community engagement participatory process or strategy recognizes and values the lived experience and expertise of its community members, thereby sharing power and resources as equal partners
- **Equitable public/private partnerships** represent a fair and formal agreement between a public agency (local, state or federal) and a private – inclusive of impacted community leadership, partner together by sharing their skills and assets in providing services to the general public and/or targeted population.
- **Housing first** refers to permanent supported housing and supports that include (i) providing housing as basic human right and not something to be earned through treatment compliance and sobriety; (ii) client choice (in housing and services) and self-determination as a cornerstone of program philosophy; (iii) using a harm reduction and trauma-informed care approach in addressing addiction and mental health treatment; (iv) working with community landlords to secure housing for clients that is normative and socially integrated; (v) providing wrap around support



services 24/7 to ensure successful tenancies and community integration; and (vi) providing housing and support as an intervention for diversion and for post-release.