

## **Mini Grants Initiative: 2017 Civic Inclusion & Engagement Fund - New Partnerships: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **GENERAL:**

- How can I learn about the Mini Grants Initiative and the current funding opportunity?
- What if I have additional questions that are not listed below?
- I have an idea for a project but I am not sure if my organization should apply and/or is eligible to apply for Mini Grants funding. What should I do?
- Who is hosting the Mini Grants Initiative: 2017 Civic Inclusion & Engagement Fund - New Partnerships?
- How do you define the Pittsburgh region?
- How do you define diversity and inclusion?
- What is the timeline for the application process?
- What steps should I follow to apply for Mini Grants funding?

### **FUNDING OPPORTUNITY:**

- What kind of opportunities is the Mini Grants Initiative going to support?
- Who is eligible to apply for Mini Grants funding?
- Is funding available to all diverse community-based organizations?
- If my organization does not have non-profit status, can we still apply?
- What is the minimum and maximum funding amount that my organization can request?

### **SELECTION CRITERIA:**

- What are the selection criteria?
- How does an Affinity Group's size and capacity impact the likelihood of seeing its project funded?

### **AWARD CRITERIA:**

- Will you support only established projects and/or programs?
- Do proposed projects need to be collaborative in nature?
- How will you ensure that funding is awarded to a variety of diverse groups and not just to one or a few communities?

## 1) GENERAL:

### a. How can I learn about the Mini Grants Initiative and the current funding opportunity?

Please visit either: <http://vibrantpittsburgh.org/Module/Resource/MiniGrantsList> or <http://jfedpgh.org/crc> to learn more, or apply by visiting: <https://jewishpittsburgh.formstack.com/forms/minigrants>

### b. What if I have additional questions that are not listed below?

Contact Eric Probola, [eprobola@jfedpgh.org](mailto:eprobola@jfedpgh.org), 412-992-5247.

### c. I have an idea for a project but I am not sure if my organization should apply and/or is eligible to apply for Mini Grants funding. What should I do?

Do not hesitate to contact us with your questions and ideas by emailing [eprobola@jfedpgh.org](mailto:eprobola@jfedpgh.org). While we cannot guarantee that your idea will be funded, we will be glad to answer any questions about our Mini Grant funding guidelines.

### d. Who is hosting the Mini Grants Initiative: 2017 Civic Inclusion & Engagement Fund - New Partnerships?

**Vibrant Pittsburgh** (VP) is an economic development nonprofit organization that was established to build a thriving and inclusive Pittsburgh region by attracting, retaining and elevating a diversity of talent. The organization does this by working with employers and diverse community groups to organize, promote and implement initiatives that are designed to welcome and retain more diverse talent; conducting targeted talent attraction initiatives at diverse national conventions, cultural festivals and career fairs using traditional and digital marketing tactics; and serving as the region's central resource, spokesperson and convener on workforce diversity and inclusion issues. More information is available at [www.vibrantpittsburgh.org](http://www.vibrantpittsburgh.org).

The purpose of the **Urban Affairs Foundation** is to promote the involvement of Jewish organizations and individuals in urban concerns. The mission of the **Community Relations Council** is to promote harmonious relations and mutual understanding within and beyond the Jewish Community and to support the State of Israel. This is accomplished by engaging in public policy activities to promote social and economic justice for all, building amicable relationships among diverse community groups, and enlisting support on behalf of Israel.

The mission of the **Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh**, a member agency of The Jewish Federations of North America, is to create a thriving, vibrant, and engaged Jewish Community by raising and allocating funds and building community locally, in Israel, and around the world. These efforts are carried out in the spirit of cooperation and inclusiveness.

Funding will not be provided to organizations or projects that contradict the mission and/or values of Vibrant Pittsburgh or the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh.

### e. How do you define the Greater Pittsburgh Region?

The Greater Pittsburgh Region corresponds to the Power of 32 Region (P32), including counties in Southwest Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia and Ohio. For the full list see: [www.powerof32.org](http://www.powerof32.org).

### f. How do you define diversity and inclusion?

Diversity is any collective mixture characterized by differences and similarities and their related complexities and tensions (R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr.). Inclusion means that every person is valued and their contributions are welcomed.

**g. What is the timeline for the application process?**

The RFP will be released on Friday, June 16, 2017. Applications will be accepted until 5 pm EDT, on Thursday, August 31, 2017. Successful applications will receive funding by the end of November 2017. Organizations that are awarded a grant will be required to sign our Standard Terms and Conditions. Grant checks will be mailed upon the receipt of the signed agreement.

**h. What steps should I follow to apply for Mini Grants funding?**

To apply for Mini Grants funding, please complete the online application (<https://jewishpittsburgh.formstack.com/forms/minigrants>) and provide the requested information and documents.

**NOTE:** If you have any questions about the application, please do not hesitate to contact Eric Probola, [eprobola@jfedpgh.org](mailto:eprobola@jfedpgh.org), 412-992-5247.

**i. Who will review the Mini-Grants applications?**

All applications will be screened by staff from Vibrant Pittsburgh and the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh; selected proposals will be reviewed by the Mini Grant Review Committee comprised of representatives from Vibrant Pittsburgh and the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh's Community Relations Council. Successful applications will receive funding by the end of November 2017.

**2) FUNDING OPPORTUNITY:**

**a. What kind of efforts is the Mini Grants Initiative going to support?**

This year, the theme is New Partnerships. We believe when organizations and communities from diverse backgrounds come together, they foster unique relationships that strengthen our region. Additionally, these new partnerships must seek to build a more inclusive and multicultural region.

To qualify for consideration, lead organizations must partner with a group or organization with whom they have not collaborated for a minimum of five years.

**b. Who is eligible to apply for Mini Grants funding?**

Lead organizations should be a community group, or otherwise represent a diverse community in the region. Lead organizations must maintain a physical presence in the Power of 32 Region (see [www.powerof32.org](http://www.powerof32.org)) and have 501(c)3 non-profit status. If an organization does not have 501(c)3 status, a partner willing to serve as a fiscal sponsor is acceptable. The majority of funding will be directed to organizations with an annual budget below \$1 million.

**c. If my organization does not have non-profit status, can we still apply?**

Yes, as long as your organization teams up with a group or organization that has non-profit status.

**d. What is the minimum and maximum funding amount that my organization can request?**

We will consider funding requests for both new and continuing initiatives. Grants generally range from \$500 to \$7,500. Past Mini Grants funding recipients are encouraged to apply.

**3) SELECTION CRITERIA:**

**a. What are the selection criteria?**

Among selection criteria are:

- Creativity and innovation: How creative and innovative is the proposed project?
- Clarity of presentation: Is the proposed project articulated in a clear and concise manner?

- Breadth and depth of impact: How will this project impact the diversity of the communities in the Pittsburgh Region?
- Likelihood of success: What is the likelihood that the applicant will achieve its project objectives and outcomes?
- Timeframe: How long will the project last and can it be successfully sustained over the proposed timeline?
- Collaborative approach: Is the proposed project a collaborative effort? What strengths do partner agencies bring to the table?
- Expected success: What is the definition of success and how will success be assessed?

**b. Do proposals need to incorporate all items listed in selection criteria?**

No. However, proposals that include the criteria items listed above will make a stronger case for funding. A proposed project may also be more competitive by seeking only as much funding as needed for a successful undertaking.

**4) AWARD CRITERIA:**

**a. Will you support only established projects and/or programs?**

No. Through Mini-Grants funding, VP and the Urban Affairs Foundation seeks to fund innovative solutions to attract and retain diverse talent in the region and both new and ongoing efforts will be considered.

**b. Do proposed projects need to be collaborative in nature?**

Yes! This year, the theme is New Partnerships. We believe when organizations and communities from diverse backgrounds come together, they foster unique relationships that strengthen our region. Additionally, these new partnerships must seek to build a more inclusive and multicultural region.

To qualify for consideration, lead organizations must partner with a group or organization with whom they have not collaborated for a minimum of five years.

**c. How will you ensure that funding is awarded to a variety of diverse groups and not just to one or a few communities?**

In marketing the Mini Grants RFP, Vibrant Pittsburgh and the Urban Affairs Foundation will pay special attention to ensure that all diverse communities in the Pittsburgh region are aware of the funding opportunity. In making funding decisions, Vibrant Pittsburgh and the Urban Affairs Foundation will ensure that the grants awarded reflect the diversity of the communities in our region.