



## **Catalyst Fund: Resources for Women of Color in Reproductive Justice** REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS – FALL 2010

### ABOUT CHICAGO FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN

**We are Chicago Foundation for Women.** We are a community of people who improve the lives of women and girls through grants, advocacy, leadership development, and public and grantee education. Since our founding in 1985, we have given more than 2,800 grants totaling more than \$17 million.

Chicago Foundation for Women advocates through its funding and leadership on behalf of women and girls and invests in emerging and established nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations throughout metropolitan Chicago which adhere to our mission and values. We support organizations within the six-county metropolitan area: Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will counties. Activities can be local, regional or in some instances statewide.

**Mission:** Chicago Foundation for Women is a grantmaking organization dedicated to increasing resources and opportunities for women and girls in the greater Chicago area. To support our philanthropy, the Foundation promotes increased investment in women and girls, raises awareness about their issues and potential, and develops them as leaders and philanthropists.

**Vision:** The Foundation envisions a community and world in which all women and girls have the opportunity to achieve their potential and live in safe, just and healthy communities.

### ABOUT THE CATALYST FUND

For a third year, Chicago Foundation for Women will be raising dollars to match funds provided by the Groundswell Fund's core program, the Catalyst Fund, a national initiative to bring new funding to women of color-led reproductive justice work. Through this partnership, the Foundation will be able to provide funds for grants and technical assistance to Chicago-area reproductive justice projects led by women of color.

Part of Chicago Foundation for Women's mission has always been to improve women's access to health services and information. This fund will amplify efforts to expand the reproductive justice platform and diversify voices of communities of color on these issues.

**What does reproductive justice mean?** Reproductive justice contends that women's reproductive health is a basic human right. It points out that the most marginalized in our country—including women of color, immigrant women, incarcerated women, women with disabilities, girls, young mothers and low-income women—face the worst health outcomes, yet most policies ignore these disparities.

The Women's Health Leadership Network of the Center for American Progress proposes "four basic cornerstones" for a reproductive justice public policy agenda:

- The ability to become a parent and to parent with dignity;
- The ability to determine whether or when to have children;
- The ability to have a healthy pregnancy; and
- The ability to have healthy and safe families and relationships.

**Why is reproductive justice important now?** This is a critical time in our nation's political history. With women of color in the lead, we must advance a reproductive justice agenda that is strong and bold.

**Why women of color?** Women of color in the U.S. disproportionately experience challenges to their reproductive health and autonomy. In response, they are working for reproductive justice for all women and their efforts have been essential to some of the most important reproductive rights victories of the past decade. This powerful vision of reproductive justice addresses the needs of women and girls who suffer the greatest reproductive health disparities and engages a new generation of young leaders. Despite this track record of success, women of color-led reproductive justice work is under-funded.

Chicago Foundation for Women is dedicated to reproductive justice and believes that it exists when all people have the economic, social and political power and resources to make healthy decisions about our bodies, our families and our communities.

The Foundation believes that reproductive justice is inherently connected to social justice. The purpose of the Catalyst Fund is to provide resources for women of color-led efforts in the reproductive justice field and facilitate mobilization of resources for institution-building to connect those in the reproductive justice movement with the larger social justice movement. This means supporting a diverse base of organizations and communities that take action on reproductive justice using a broad set of strategies, as well as supporting coordination and collaboration among these organizations and communities.

**WHAT CONSTITUTES  
"WOMEN OF COLOR-LED"?**

- Organizations with a majority women of color board, staff and/or volunteers; OR
- A women of color-led effort within a majority white organization; OR
- A partnership between a women of color-led organization and an organization with a different constituency; OR
- A women of color-led coalition; OR
- Efforts within people of color movements/organizations that expand their range of issues to include reproductive justice.

**PURPOSE OF THE GRANTS**

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The Foundation will award up to \$175,000 in advocacy grants to a diverse group of 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations based in the Chicago metropolitan area. Grants will range from \$15,000 to \$50,000. Applicants' organizational operating budgets cannot exceed \$2 million. Catalyst Fund grantees from the Fall 2009 grant cycle are welcome to apply for renewed funding.

Organizations and programs applying for funding must be dedicated to reproductive justice and have as their primary constituency to serve, educate and/or advocate for women of color.

Advocacy is essential to the Foundation's programmatic efforts and funding. Chicago Foundation for Women and the Groundswell Fund believe if we do not engage in advocacy by and for women, we leave the decisions of our society to those who may not understand women's concerns and issues.

**The Foundation is interested in reproductive justice proposals that address the following advocacy areas:**

**INFLUENCE COMMUNITY SYSTEMS**

- Affect or inform the actions of community systems (examples include the media, health care or education) or any level of government expressed in laws, annual budgets, administrative practices, regulations and executive or judicial actions.
- Impact community systems through policy development, public education, litigation, research, education and communication with policy makers and opinion leaders.

**GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING**

- Engage communities most affected by reproductive oppression to identify issues, develop campaigns, construct solutions and organize for change.
- Expand the definition of reproductive justice beyond "choice" to include key reproductive health issues.

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

- Engagement of historically underrepresented women and girls to support personal transformation and empowerment within the context of social, cultural, institutional and structural changes.

**COLLABORATION WITHIN THE REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE MOVEMENT AND AMONG SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS**

- Create and/or strengthen relationships among organizations in the reproductive justice movement.
- Create and/or strengthen working relationships with allied organizations. For example, those in the health, violence or traditional organizing fields.
- Address the intersections of gender, race, class and other identities and experiences that affect individuals and communities.

Grant resources may be used for general operating support or advocacy-project specific work. As this fund is intended to strengthen the field and organizations, grants for existing women of color-led reproductive justice work are a priority. Funding for new projects is not encouraged.

**SUBMISSION PROCESS AND TIMELINE**

The submission process for the Catalyst Fund is identical to the General Fund with the addition of a narrative in Step One of the application process.

The application process is administered in two steps.

**Step One: APPLICATION – Due Friday, August 20, 2010 at 5 p.m.**

Applicants must submit five collated sets of the following materials, paper-clipped and in this order:

1. [Grant Application Form](#) (Word document)
2. An outline of the proposed project (advocacy goals, activities and how project relates to the priorities outlined in the request for proposals—three pages maximum). This outline should address the following questions (if requesting renewed funding, see sidebar for additional information):
  - a. Why does your organization or the project for which you seek funding identify as “women of color-led” and how does your leadership (staff/board) reflect and remain accountable to your constituency?
  - b. How is your organization connected to the larger reproductive justice movement, and how do you contribute to it?
  - c. How is your organization connected to social justice movements other than reproductive justice?
  - d. What are the plans for evaluation and dissemination of your advocacy work?
3. Program budget, if applicable
4. List of other sources of support, if applicable
5. One copy of the organization’s most recent 501(c)(3) certification, or that of its fiscal agent with a letter of approval from the fiscal agent
6. Two copies of most recent organization audit or filed 990

**APPLICANTS FOR RENEWED FUNDING**

In the proposed project outline, please list your goals as articulated in your Catalyst Fund 2009 proposal and the progress you have made on each goal. (The outline page limit is extended to four for renewals.)

- What factors enabled you to meet your goals?
- What barriers did you encounter in meeting (or not meeting) your goals?
- What changes occurred over the last year in your reproductive justice goals?
- What goals and strategies do you propose to maintain in your 2010 work?
- What goals and strategies will be changed in your 2010 work?

The materials must be delivered in hard copy, either by mail or in person, by no later than 5 p.m. on the due date to:

Associate Program Officer  
Chicago Foundation for Women  
1 East Wacker Drive, Suite 1620  
Chicago, IL 60601

**Step Two: FULL PROPOSAL – Due Friday, September 24, 2010 by 5 p.m. <sup>1</sup>**

Within four weeks, staff will inform grant applicants if they are invited to submit a full proposal. Full proposals are accepted by invitation only. Organizations must submit five collated sets of the following materials, paper-clipped and in this order:

1. Proposal narrative (limit five pages, proposal invitations will include details)
2. Updated project/program budget
3. Organization’s current operating budget with year-to-date actuals
4. List of other funding sources for the proposed project
5. List of previous year's funding sources for the proposed project

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<sup>1</sup> PLEASE NOTE: Please do not submit a full proposal unless specifically requested. If you are selected to submit a proposal for funding, you will be notified by **Friday, September 3, 2010**. The letter will indicate the specific information and supporting materials to be included in the proposal.

6. Organizational chart
7. Most recent staff and board lists
8. One copy of the Site Visit Availability Form (included in the invitation for a full proposal)
9. *Optional:* Supplemental materials that directly support the request, which may include newsletters, annual reports, media clippings, etc.

**Proposal Review Process**

Full proposal submissions will be reviewed by Chicago Foundation for Women’s volunteer-driven Grantmaking Committee which includes board members, Foundation staff and knowledgeable members of the community. A site visit may be requested with a Foundation team composed of Grantmaking Committee members. The Board of Directors will review and vote on the recommendations during its December meeting for the Fall Cycle and its June meeting for the Spring Cycle. Organizations will be informed of the outcome within five business days of the meeting.

**EXPECTATIONS OF GRANTEES**

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Catalyst Fund grantees are required to participate in the Making the Case online evaluation process. A final report will be due December 31, 2011. Requirements of the report will be detailed in the grant award letter. During the grant year, capacity building activities will be offered to grantees through the Groundswell Fund, for which participation is voluntary.

**CALENDAR**

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<b>Grant Application Form deadline</b>	<b>Friday, August 20, 2010 at 5 p.m.</b>
<b>Applicants invited to submit full proposals</b>	<b>Friday, September 3, 2010</b>
<b>Proposal deadline</b> ( <i>Submission by invitation only</i> )	<b>Friday, September 24, 2010 at 5 p.m.</b>
<b>Review by the Grantmaking Committee</b>	<b>October – November 2010</b>
<b>Board of Directors' approval</b>	<b>December 2010</b>