

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: ENDING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

### About the Ms. Foundation for Women

Women are more than half the population, yet—even with the progress of the last 40 years—they don't have equal opportunity, voice or power. The Ms. Foundation for Women does not accept the status quo. The tough challenges we face as a nation—poverty, violence and injustice—cannot be solved without the full participation and leadership of women. We invest in the social justice trailblazers—especially women from the low-income communities and communities of color most affected by these problems—who have the vision and drive to fight for justice.

Every day, we help over 150 grassroots organizations nationwide fight for changes like good paying jobs, reproductive health, ending violence against women and girls, and the inclusion of women at decision-making tables. The Ms. Foundation has invested over \$50 million and influenced other funders to support solutions from the ground up. We deliver funding, build skills and connect activists with allies to create change that benefits women, families and communities. Together, we work for a nation in which power and possibility are not limited by gender, race, class or any other factor.

### Building a Movement to End Child Sexual Abuse

The Ms. Foundation has a longstanding commitment to ending violence against women and girls. This commitment includes a focus on child sexual abuse that dates back to when the foundation was started more than 35 years ago. At that time, child sexual abuse was just being named as part of the early feminist anti-rape movement. More than three decades later, many survivors now speak openly about their experiences; the media regularly covers child sexual abuse cases; legislators pass an increasing number of policies directed at people who sexually abuse; and a network of public and private organizations exist to address child sexual abuse and remedy its effects.

And yet, the number of girls and boys who experience child sexual abuse remains staggering. With less than 10% of all cases reported to legal authorities, the full magnitude is hidden from view. Conservative estimates suggest one in three girls and one in six boys experience sexual abuse before the age of eighteen. This represents millions of adult survivors in the U.S. today, all of whom live with the effects of this trauma. These effects, scientifically documented and anecdotally related, are cyclical, chronic, debilitating and sometimes fatal.

In as many as 93% of all cases, the offender is a person known to and trusted by the child, such as a family member or family friend. Whether familiar to their victims or not, those who abuse are often portrayed publicly as “monsters” without recognizing important differences among them (i.e., differences between juveniles and adults) or the fact that many have themselves been abused as children.

Society's inability to stem the tide of child sexual abuse affects not only individuals, but also our collective ability to create safe communities. Child sexual abuse is a broad, deeply rooted, cross-cultural, cross-economic issue and its prevention requires dramatic shifts in the way our society envisions children, family, social responsibility, power, sexuality, sex education and systematized oppression. These shifts

require thoughtful, inclusive, systemic approaches that build change from the community level through to national policy, with advocates and allies at every level in between.

## **Funding Priorities**

The Ms. Foundation seeks to support building the movement to end child sexual abuse. We believe this long term vision begins with supporting communities in **developing the relationships and infrastructure needed to grow and sustain this movement**. While we recognize the need for increased funding for direct services in this area, the focus of this grantmaking will be on projects with a primary **emphasis on organizing and advocacy**. In particular, we seek to support projects that go beyond education and awareness to **address specific changes in policy, culture or practice** related to child sexual abuse.

To this end, the Ms. Foundation welcomes grant proposals that reflect each of the following **essential aspects**:

- **Social Change.** Projects that foster a groundswell of new thinking, discussion and collective action on child sexual abuse. This includes activism that goes beyond education and awareness to address specific changes in policy, culture or practice. These changes may be short-term (i.e., within the grant period) or long-term (i.e., beyond the grant period). If long-term, the proposal must indicate how this opportunity fits within a larger plan for achieving the specific change you seek.
- **Adult and Community Responsibility.** Projects that engage adults and communities in the prevention of child sexual abuse. Communities may be geographic, cultural, faith-based or provider-based (i.e., rape crisis, child abuse prevention, healthy sexuality, etc). While we do not fund educational programs for children, we will consider supporting efforts that engage youth in organizing and activism on this issue.
- **Abuse Closer to Home.** Projects that help to focus greater attention and resources on abuse where it happens most often—namely in our families and by people who are known and trusted.
- **Collaboration.** Projects that go beyond a specific set of trainings to foster the building of real and lasting relationships with diverse stakeholders. In particular, we seek to support the creation and/or strengthening of community infrastructure that brings people together to develop strategies to prevent abuse.
- **Organizing Broad-Based Constituency.** Projects that seek to engage the full range of people affected by child sexual abuse including survivors, family members, allies and/or members of the community at large. In particular, we seek to support organizing approaches that increase the number of people who are active in changing policies and practices related to this issue.
- **Measurable Outcomes Related to Movement Building.** Projects that reflect a commitment to achieving specific, measurable outcomes. While working toward the ultimate goal of ending child sexual abuse, we recognize the need to establish realistic outcomes along the way; these may include outcomes related to movement building. (Examples of movement building outcomes include: increase the number of people active in changing a specific policy or practice by %; expand the number of community leaders who speak out on this issue by #; secure % increase from local funding sources; develop key messages that create new entry points for policymakers on this issue; etc.)

Proposals that additionally reflect one or more of the following **preferred aspects** will be given further priority:

- **Root Causes.** Projects that go beyond a framework of individual survivors and offenders to understand the root causes of child sexual abuse. This includes addressing the larger social and cultural conditions that perpetuate abuse, including our beliefs and practices around power, sexuality, family, children and ownership.
- **Challenge Survivor/ Offender Dichotomy.** Projects that move away from the survivor/ offender dichotomy, recognizing that many offenders are also survivors. In addition, we seek to support work that takes into account the often complex relationships in child sexual abuse and supports offenders being held accountable but not demonized.
- **Amplify Voices of Those Most Affected.** Projects that amplify the voices of survivors, recovering offenders and/or family members, and actively involve them at the core of the project's work to create specific changes in policy, culture or practice.
- **Broaden Our Response Beyond Criminal Justice.** Projects that reflect the belief that a criminal justice response alone cannot prevent child sexual abuse. Current policies that emphasize tougher sentences and increased monitoring of sex offenders use up scarce public resources and leave prevention programs woefully underfunded. We seek to support projects that advance a more comprehensive approach to safety, including those that encourage a range of options for holding abusers accountable and help to prioritize funding for prevention over punitive policies.
- **Intersectional Analysis.** Projects that take into account the role that systematic oppression—including sexism, racism, poverty, homophobia and discrimination against people with disabilities—plays in shaping one's experience of child sexual abuse and our responses to it.
- **Connected to Broader Social Justice Movement.** Projects that reflect child sexual abuse as part of a broader social justice movement, and aim to reinvigorate community and political organizing as strategies for ending abuse.

## Guidelines

- This proposal process will include two stages:

(1) Open call for **Letters of Inquiry**—deadline January 10, 2011

(2) Invitation for select applicants to submit a full **Grant Proposal**—deadline March 1, 2011

NOTE: All applicants must submit a Letter of Inquiry. From that pool, a limited number of applicants will be invited to submit a full Grant Proposal.

- Applicants that are invited to submit a full Grant Proposal will be notified by February 1, 2011 and provided further guidelines. Please be aware that there is a **quick turn around time** to submit the full Grant Proposal by March 1, 2011. Please plan accordingly; late applications will not be accepted.

- We anticipate making a limited number of grants **ranging in size from \$20,000 to \$50,000**. Funding amounts will depend on the quality of the proposal, history of experience addressing child sexual abuse, and evidence of a sustained commitment to this issue beyond this funding opportunity.
- **One-year grants** will be awarded, with the grant period running from **April 2011 – March 2012**.
- For organizations awarded a grant through this process, there will be an option to apply for a **renewal grant** at the conclusion of the first year. Renewal grants are not automatic and will be awarded based on specific criteria outlined at the conclusion of the first year.
- Organizations/coalitions may submit only one proposal.

### **Additional Information**

- This is a competitive process; not all applications will be funded and applications that are funded may not be funded at requested levels. If an applicant is awarded a grant through this process, there is no guarantee for future funding beyond 2011.
- Grants are for project funding, not general operating support.
- The Ms. Foundation may request additional information from the applicant.
- The Ms. Foundation makes grants to groups working in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and U.S. territories.
- The Ms. Foundation does not fund direct service projects, videos, stand-alone conferences or performances, individuals, scholarships, capital or endowment requests, fundraising events, university-based research, or government agencies.

### **Letters of Inquiry**

Please review our funding priorities carefully before deciding whether to submit an application. If you feel that your proposed activity fits within the funding priorities, you will need to submit a **Letter of Inquiry**.

Letters of Inquiry should include:

- Brief description of your organization or coalition
- Project goals, including the specific change in policy, culture or practice you seek to achieve
- Primary activities, including how your project reflects the essential aspects and, if applicable, preferred aspects outlined in this RFP
- Measurable outcomes
- Funding amount requested

All Letters of Inquiry must use the following format:

- 12 point font size
- 1" margins on all sides
- Typed and single-spaced in Times New Roman font
- Maximum 3 pages (numbered)
- Saved in PDF format

NOTE: Your Letter of Inquiry must be saved in PDF format and then uploaded through the online application procedure described below.

### Online Application Procedure

- All Letters of Inquiry must be submitted through the Ms. Foundation's online application process. Please use the following link to access the application form: [Ms. Foundation Application Form \[http://goo.gl/0r9vh\]](http://goo.gl/0r9vh). You can also access the application form by visiting our website: <http://ms.foundation.org/grants/rfps>.
- When you access the application form, you will be prompted to create a username and password. This will allow you to save your work and access your application in the future. Please retain your username and password. The Ms. Foundation does not have access to your account log-in information.
- Once an application has been saved or submitted, you can log back into the system using the following link: [Ms. Foundation Account Log In \[http://goo.gl/5COvQ\]](http://goo.gl/5COvQ). In order to view your account page, your browser must be able to view cookies.
- The online application will ask you a brief set of questions before prompting you to upload your Letter of Inquiry saved in PDF format.

NOTE: There is a 1MB size limit for files uploaded to your application. If you do not already have PDF conversion capabilities, you can create a PDF within the size limit by using *PrimoPDF* software (to download for free, visit [www.primoPDF.com](http://www.primoPDF.com)). Please note that scanning a printed document to create a PDF will likely produce a document too large for uploading.

- All Letters of Inquiry must be submitted through the online system by **Monday, January 10, 2011 at 5pm (Eastern standard time)**.

NOTE: The system will shut down at 5pm eastern standard time. After that time, applications can no longer be accepted. Please do not wait until the deadline to submit your application. We cannot make exceptions for late applications, even if the delay was due to computer issues or other unforeseen complications. Please note that incomplete applications, applications sent via email or regular mail, or applications that do not adhere to the specified requirements will not be reviewed.

- Please familiarize yourself with this online application before the deadline. For technical difficulties, please send an email to [grants@ms.foundation.org](mailto:grants@ms.foundation.org). Due to limited staff capacity, we regret that we cannot respond to phone calls.

## **Grantmaking Schedule**

Letters of Inquiry: Received by January 10, 2011, 5pm (Eastern standard time)

Notification of Status: February 1, 2011

Solicited Grant Proposals: Received by March 1, 2011, 5pm (Eastern standard time)

Notification of Final Status: April 2011

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