



Capacity Building Grants 2015

2015 Capacity Building Grants Request for Proposal (RFP) Guidelines

The Strengthening Communities Initiative (SCI) provides funding to support the development and implementation of collaborative and innovative community projects that build the capacity of grassroots and community-based organizations. These projects seek to address economic development, education, health, housing, transportation, and safety issues. Capacity Building Grants are awarded to teams, consisting of nonprofits, community-based organizations, and/or grassroots groups and University of Memphis faculty and students, for projects that are framed by engaged scholarship. The SCI Capacity Building Grant awards are offered annually in partnership with the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, United Way of the Mid-South, and the University of Memphis Engaged Scholarship Faculty Committee.

(Please visit www.memphis.edu/scgrants for examples of past SCI projects)

(Please visit www.memphis.edu/esfc/es_facstaff.php to find out more about faculty engaged scholarship at the University of Memphis)

Capacity Building Grant Award Amount: Up to \$18,500

Application Deadline: Friday, January 30, 2015 (noon)

Three Key Goals

- I. **Organizational Capacity Building:** SCI supports projects that strengthen and enable the community partner organization to build its structures, systems, people, and skills so that it can achieve greater performance and impact. Capacity Building activities include:
 - Evaluation of Organization's Core Services
 - Improvement of Organization's Program Delivery
 - Organizational or Community Assets & Needs Assessments
 - Strategic Collaborations
 - Technology Skills, Training, and Implementation
 - Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Planning
- II. **Geographically-based Projects:** SCI supports projects that clearly identify and impact a defined geographic community; for example a neighborhood, street, housing complex, or work site. However, projects that do not have a geographic focus but instead target a group of people who share a common interest and represent a significantly underserved population will also be considered.
- III. **Engaged Scholarship & Student Involvement:** SCI supports projects that demonstrate evidence of engaged scholarship and student involvement as a significant component of their project. Engaged scholarship involves faculty members and students in academic projects in a sustained manner with community groups; connects university outreach with community organizational goals; and furthers productive relationships between the university and the community.

Eligibility Requirements

1. **Project Timeline:** Capacity Building Grant projects must be started and completed within 18 months of the grant award, which will occur approximately August 1, 2015.
2. **Project & Organization Location:** Project sites and community organizations must be located in west Tennessee; eastern Arkansas; or north Mississippi.
3. **Focus Areas:** Projects must relate to one or more of the following focus areas:
 - Economic Development
 - Education
 - Health
 - Housing
 - Transportation
 - Safety
4. **Partners:** Projects must be a collaboration between at least one nonprofit, community-based organization, or grassroots group and University of Memphis faculty
 - **Community Organizations:** Include neighborhood organizations, voluntary associations, community development corporations, intermediary organizations, and other nonprofit organizations. Priority will be given to project teams that include grassroots organizations.
 - If the nonprofit community organization is not a 501(c)(3) organization, then a 501(c)(3) organization must serve as the fiscal agent for purposes of the grant.
 - Community organizations may not participate in more than one Strengthening Communities award at one time. Therefore, 2013 and 2014 SCI Capacity Building award recipients are not eligible for this grant round.
 - **UM Faculty Partner:** Must be full-time faculty at the University of Memphis at the time of application.
 - Applications from faculty who have not submitted a final report for a previous SCI Grant will not be considered. It is expected that the faculty grant recipient will remain at the University of Memphis for at least one year following the conclusion of the grant period. The UM team may include additional faculty members, associate staff, and students.
 - UM faculty members cannot receive more than one Engaged Research Grant within a three-year period. For example: if a faculty member was awarded an SCI grant in 2012, 2013, or 2014, he/she is not eligible for a 2015 grant.
 - Priority will be given to faculty members who have not received SCI funding in the past.
 - Faculty partners must submit an Endorsement Form signed by their Department Chair or Director. If the UM faculty partner's program does not have a Department Chair or Director, or if the faculty partner is the Department Chair or Director, this form must be signed by the UM faculty partner's Dean. The endorsement form can be found on the SCI website under "[How to Apply](#)."
5. **Prior Grants:** Applications will not be considered if the organization or faculty partner did not submit the requisite reports for a previous SCI Grant.

Application Components

A. Project Description: Applicants will be asked to describe/answer the following:

- The proposed project to be funded by Strengthening Communities.
- The defined community that will be impacted by the project.
- The need the project will address.
- How the project relates to one (or more) of the focus areas.
- If your project builds upon a past SCI (Small or Capacity Building) Grant: How will it take the previous project in a new direction?
- How will the proposed project increase the capacity of the community and/or organization?

B. Resident/Stakeholder Involvement: Applicants must provide evidence as to how the organization, faculty, and residents of the defined community (or stakeholders who are a part of the defined community) were substantively involved in project planning and will be actively involved in project execution.

- To demonstrate this collaborative team approach, letters of commitment (no more than three) from the primary residents or stakeholders should be included in the application. Evidence of a proven track record of collaboration will also be considered favorably.

C. Engaged Scholarship & Student Involvement: Faculty and students may assist community groups to articulate their community's needs, to identify and develop programmatic solutions, to carry out the project, and to document the changes that result from the project.

- **Engaged Scholarship:** Applications should describe the faculty partner's research question(s); briefly discuss the relevant literature, and the scholarly products expected to result from the project.
- **Student Involvement:** Applications should describe how University of Memphis students will be involved in the project, how their involvement will enhance their mastery of course content and disciplinary concepts, and how it will enhance their retention at the University.
 - Graduate assistants and interns can help facilitate projects, but priority should be given to the involvement of undergraduate students. Student involvement can take place inside or outside of the classroom, but should be documented in the class syllabus, if applicable.

D. Outcomes: Applicants must identify tangible, measurable outcomes and a plan for assessment in the following areas:

- Capacity building - how will the project build the capacity of the community organization.
- Broader community impact – how the community being served will be strengthened through the project.
- Engaged scholarship - the scholarly products that will result from the project.
- Student learning and retention - how student involvement will enhance their mastery of course content and disciplinary concepts, and how it will enhance their retention at the University.
- Project long-term impact - Applications must demonstrate the long-term impact of the project, which may include: policy or organizational change and plans to secure additional funding.

E. Timeline: A timeline must be provided for the project, documenting that the project will be completed within 18 months of the grant award (August 1, 2015 – February 1, 2017).

Budget

Project budgets must be structured so that all partners receive benefit from the grant. A budget template is provided on the SCI website under “[How to Apply](#).” Project budgets should include the following:

- **Faculty:** Up to \$6,500 for University of Memphis associated expenses: including travel, equipment, supplies, faculty summer salary (maximum \$4,500), stipends for student assistants (requests for tuition and fees are not permitted), and other expenses.
- **Community Organization:** The remainder of the budget (\$12,000 or less) must be allocated for implementation of the project for the benefit of the community identified by the proposal. Suitable implementation expenses include, but are not limited to: equipment, supplies, or additional staffing needed to fulfill the project.

Strengthening Communities Grant awards will **not** fund:

- Program expansion
- Building construction or renovation
- Code enforcement
- Core operating costs or existing positions
- Endowments
- Loans
- Projects related to partisan politics or elections
- Educational Scholarships
- Individuals

Application Process

Step 1: Attend Interest Meeting

Applicants are REQUIRED to attend at least one of the Interest Meetings (listed below) prior to applying for a Strengthening Communities grant. Interest meeting offerings are as follows:

- Thursday, September 4, 2014: 8:30 - 10:00am, in the University Center, Room 342 (Shelby Room), on the University of Memphis campus (Parking validation available at meeting).
- Thursday, October 9, 2014: 5:30 - 7:00pm, at the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, 1900 Union Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee 38104.
- Thursday, November 13, 2014: 3:00 - 4:30pm, in the University Center, Room 340 (Memphis Room), on the University of Memphis campus (Parking validation available at meeting).

A representative from both the nonprofit community organization and the UM faculty team are required to attend at least one of the Interest Meetings listed above. All meetings will provide new partner networking opportunities for community organizations and faculty partners.

****Register for Interest Meetings: [Here](#)

Step 2: Application Submission

Proposals must be submitted through our online system by noon on Friday, January 30, 2015

****To apply, use the Grant Application form on the SCI website under “[How to Apply](#)”.

Funding decisions will be made by the Strengthening Communities Grant Review Committee, made up of representatives from the University of Memphis, the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, United Way of the Mid-South, and the Engaged Scholarship Faculty Committee. Up to five finalists will be invited to a meeting with the SCI Grant Review Committee in April 2015. All applicants will be notified of the Committee’s final funding decisions via email by Thursday, April 30, 2015, and grant funds will be awarded approximately August 1, 2015.

Grant Compliance

As part of the grant contract and in order to be eligible for future grant awards, grant recipients must comply with the following requirements:

- Teams must attend and participate in information sharing meetings held twice per year. They must also host one site visit by the SCI Administration Team/Grant Review Committee.
- Teams must complete 9-month and 18-month reports, and submit all required grant reporting documents in a timely manner. Reporting guidelines will be provided to grant recipients at the initial award meeting.
- Teams must share all scholarly, artistic, and published products created as part of the project with the Strengthening Communities Initiative committee.
- In support of our goal to showcase our collective work, teams may be occasionally asked to participate in meetings, exhibitions, panels, or other events, as requested.

Grant Review and Notification Timeline

- September 4, 2014: Interest Meeting, 8:30 - 10:00am, in the University Center, Room 342 (Shelby Room), on the University of Memphis campus
- October 9, 2014: Interest Meeting, 5:30 - 7:00pm, at the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, 1900 Union Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee 38104
- November 13, 2014: Interest Meeting, 3:00 - 4:30pm, in the University Center, Room 340 (Memphis Room), on the University of Memphis campus
- January 30, 2015: Online application submission deadline at noon.
- April 2015: Executive Committee holds meetings with grant award finalists.
- By April 30, 2015: Grant award notification by email.
- August 1, 2015: Approximate date of grant award.
- September 2015: Grant Recipient Meeting (at the Univ. of Memphis)
- March 2016: Grant Recipient Meeting (at the Univ. of Memphis)
- May 29, 2016: 9 Month Reports due (progress through April 30, 2016)
- September 2016: Grant Recipient Meeting (at the Univ. of Memphis)
- February 1, 2017: Project completion deadline.
- February 28, 2017: 18-Month Reports due (final report)

Contact

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