

NOVAS Micro-Grant Application

Who We Are

New Orleans Voices for Accountability and Safety (NOVAS) was the first community advisory group launched under the MacArthur Foundation's national Safety and Justice Challenge (SJC). The Foundation provided funding, starting in 2016, to help reduce the jail population and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the New Orleans criminal legal system. We are a diverse volunteer membership group that includes community organizers, teachers, lawyers, artists, criminal justice leaders, and people impacted by incarceration. We are dedicated to holding public agencies and officials accountable to SJC goals and initiatives.

NOVAS Micro-Grant Program

The NOVAS Micro-Grant Program provides support for development of grassroots projects or organizations whose mission aligns with one or more of NOVAS' values of community-oriented safety, accountability, racial justice, economic justice, and equity in the criminal legal system. We will provide two types of grants (maximum award \$5,000): (1) seed grants for those seeking to start a grassroots project or new community organization; and (2) grants for projects supported by ongoing organizations with a proven track record of advancing initiatives to support (via direct aid, advocacy, or other programming) disadvantaged and/or systems-impacted communities.

Those seeking funding for the first type of grant will be paired up with a veteran organization assigned to help guide, support, and mentor their project. Full grant funding requires that recipients initiate regular contact and schedule check-ins with their mentor organization.

While we will consider all proposals that align with NOVAS' values, we especially welcome proposals for initiatives whose work falls under one of the following categories:

1. **Re-Entry services** to support the well-being, financial stability, education and/or careers of individuals recently released from incarceration, and reduce recidivism in the criminal legal system.
2. **Support for survivors of violence** – projects that provide support (in the form of financial aid, counseling, mentorship, and/or support for the physical, mental, and/or emotional well-being) for survivors of violence.
3. **Court advocacy** – programs that pair systems-impacted community members with court advocates and/or programs that train or recruit court advocates.

Eligibility:

1. Eligible organizations: 501(c)3 non-profit organizations **or** projects with a fiscal sponsor. However, if you do not operate as a 501(c)3 nor have a fiscal sponsor, do not let this prevent you from applying on behalf of your organization. Please let us know and NOVAS will assist you in acquiring a fiscal sponsor.
2. Interested applicants/organizations are able to demonstrate the existence of mutually-beneficial, trusting relationships with the impacted communities they serve.
3. Projects must be based in and conduct the majority of their activities in the Greater New Orleans area.
4. Only grantees or organizations that operate with a total budget (not counting NOVAS micro-grant) of less than \$100,000 per year will be considered.

Expectations

Grant recipients are responsible for setting up an accountability process that allows for regular, ongoing assessments of their use of funds. Grantees should expect to schedule routine check-ins with the granting organization to discuss the distribution of funds and provide concrete data on project outcomes.

Questions to Answer in your application narrative:

1. Do you operate as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, have a fiscal agent, or neither? If 501(c)3, please attach a copy of your letter; if you operate with a fiscal agent, please provide their name and contact information.
*Note: you may still apply for a grant if neither applies.
2. Describe the vision, operations/activities, and objectives of the project/organization for which you are requesting funding. What do you intend to do with this grant? (maximum 250 words)
2. Describe specific outcomes that would indicate success of your project/organization.
3. Briefly describe your target population and explain how this grant will allow you to better serve this community.
4. Please provide 2-3 letters of support and/or references who can speak to your previous work or the work of your organization (e.g., a volunteer, intern, partner, fiscal agent, benefactor, or someone else with whom you have had a working relationship.) Letters are preferred, but references will be accepted as well.
6. If you are applying for grant type #1 (seed grant to fund a new grassroots initiative or new organization), you may suggest a possible mentor organization.

Direct all inquiries and micro-grant applications to NOVAS c/o Devorah Levy-Pearlman, e-mail: info@nolavoices.org.

Application deadline: April 30, 2024