



Small Grants in Media & Communications Available - Spring 2007

## Collaborative Grants in Media and Communications

**Proposals Due April 4, 2007**

*Necessary Knowledge for a Democratic Public Sphere Program*  
<http://www.ssrc.org/programs/media>

### WHAT

The SSRC is pleased to announce its small grants project for academic-advocacy collaboration in the media and communications field. This project will provide grants of up to \$7,500 for research that supports efforts to change the media / telecommunications infrastructure, practices, policies or content. The grants are intended for short-term work, completable and usable by advocacy partners within the next 4-12 months. Proposals for this round must be submitted by April 4, 2007 by 5PM EST in order to be eligible for funding. Grant recipients will be announced on April 20, 2007.

### WHO

Proposals **must** be:

1. Submitted by a US-based nonprofit advocacy, organizing or community group working on media and/or telecommunications issues. Groups with nonprofit fiscal sponsorship are also eligible. (A limited number of international non-profit organizations will be solicited by invitation only.)
2. Structured as a partnership with an academic researcher based at a university, college or other research institution. This can include advanced graduate students.

There are no citizenship requirements for participants in these projects.

### CRITERIA

Please review the attached list of criteria carefully **before** preparing your proposal.

**All projects must:**

- Be strategically useful in their proposed advocacy and/or organizing context.
- Produce scholarship that meets academic standards.
- Have a realistic workflow and timeframe.

**The selection committee will also favor proposals that:**

- Have a clear plan for the application of the findings of the research in policy-making processes or advocacy campaigns to change the media / telecommunications infrastructure, practices, policies or content. Scholarship that facilitates field-building (i.e. curriculum development, tool-building, analysis of best practice) will also be considered.
- Be useful for organizations, communities, and advocacy efforts beyond the applicant organization.
- Address issues of disparate impact on communities on the basis of race, class, gender, ethnicity,



- age or other identity/status category.
- Build capacity—skills, tools, experience, access to data sets—within the "user" organization and/or community.
- Use methods or models of research that have proved effective in similar contexts.
- Reflect diversity in the staff or group involved with the project.
- The committee will seek to fund a diverse mix of projects, including consideration of regional diversity, issue-area, scope (local, state-wide, national, etc), type of organization (national lobbying, grassroots community, transnational, etc.) and goals and methods (e.g., capacity-building, policy interventions, project or movement analysis, surveys and/or data collection, etc.)

#### **Bonus points for proposals that:**

- Involve collaboration between two or more advocacy/community groups in the project design and the plan of use for the research.
- Use participatory methods to engage community and/or advocacy group members in framing the questions, data collection, and/or analysis.
- Are related to issues of telephony, publishing, privacy, intellectual property, independent media, or spectrum.

## **PROPOSAL STRUCTURE**

Please submit proposals via email to [mediahub@ssrc.org](mailto:mediahub@ssrc.org). Please send a project outline of no more than 5 pages including:

- A short description (max. 100 words) of how the research will be used to advance public-interest change in the media/communications arena.
- A description of the research project (max. 1000 words). This should cover both process and outcomes, and address the criteria above. Describe the final product you will deliver to the SSRC upon completion of the study and how you see other organizations potentially using the findings and products of the research project.
- A description of the proposing organization (max. 200 words), including mission, constituency, geographical scope of work, and annual budget.
- The name, institutional affiliation(s) and research experience of the academic partner.
- A project timeline.

Plus:

- The researcher's CV.
- A budget of up to \$7500, with itemized major expenditures. If the project draws on other resources or financing, please indicate them.

## **SAMPLE PROJECT TOPICS**

Proposals might seek to:

- Measure the success or failure of mainstream media in advancing different public interest goals or values.
- Measure the impact of existing "alternative"/ community media systems on communities, public discourse, or democratic processes.
- Develop better, actionable accounts of the role of 'new media' in people's lives.
- Analyze policymaking and/or regulatory systems.



- Analyze emerging systems, frameworks, or models of media and communications that transcend the current regulatory framework.
  - Analyze economic models, industry structure, markets, or audiences for different kinds of media
  - Create analytical tools or research resources for use by advocates, communities, or the public.
  - Document or evaluate advocacy or organizing strategies around communications and media issues.
- 

## BACKGROUND

The Collaborative Grants project is part of the Necessary Knowledge for a Democratic Public Sphere (NKDPS) Program of the Social Science Research Council, working in partnership with CIMA: Center for International Media Action and the McGannonCenter for Communications Research at Fordham University. The program is funded by the Media, Arts and Culture program of the Ford Foundation.

The NKDPS program is launching a series of funding opportunities to help increase the production, use and capacity for research to serve public-interest advocacy and organizing around media and communications. These mini-grants for collaborative advocacy- academic partnerships have been initiated to meet the short-term research needs of advocacy and policy actors.

Past submissions that were approved in previous rounds can be viewed online at: [http://www.ssrc.org/programs/media/collaborative\\_grants/](http://www.ssrc.org/programs/media/collaborative_grants/) . Note that new applications do not have to work within the exact same range of topics as we encourage a diversity of issues that relate to the media and communications field.

Several other funding projects will be launched in the next months, including a "Research Bounties" project that place prizes on advocacy-defined research and a larger program to support longer-term advocacy-academic research partnerships and training.

For more information on the program, see <http://www.ssrc.org/programs/media>. For all program-related inquiries, please write to [mediahub@ssrc.org](mailto:mediahub@ssrc.org) . Subscribe to MediaResearchHub-News for program updates, research funding opportunities, and conference information at <http://listserve.ssrc.org/mailman/listinfo/mediaresearchhub-news>.