



Date: December 11, 2020
To: City Councilmembers, Seattle Legislative Department
From: Mariko Lockhart, SOCR, Director
Erika Pablo, SOCR, Senior Civil Rights Strategic Advisor
John Page, SOCR, Equitable Funding Advisor
Subject: **2020 Collaborative Grantmaking: Community Alternatives to Incarceration and Policing RFP Conditional Grantees**

The following memorandum summarizes the review and rating process, the Collaborative Grantmaking (CGM) participants' funding recommendations, and SOCR's planned award announcement, in advance of anticipated conditional offers to be sent to grantees on Friday December 11, 2020.

Summary:

This year, SOCR implemented a Collaborative Grantmaking (CGM) project that allows for a democratic and participatory process to make funding decisions. The 2020 CGM Request for Proposal (RFP), focused on Community Alternatives to Incarceration and Policing, aims to invest in organizations or coalitions that will build a collective network that supports community members impacted by the criminal legal system, provide capacity building to members of the collective network, and develop proposals for alternatives to incarceration and policing.

SOCR received ten proposals totaling \$4,520,663 in requested funds from organizations/coalitions responding to the 2020 CGM RFP. Approximately \$1,000,000 is available for 2 years in this RFP. In 2021, \$500,000 is available. The remaining \$500,000 will be available in the subsequent year, up to December 31, 2022.

The CGM Participants recommend that we fully fund two proposals, which would provide support to a total of five organizations.

- 1) **Collective Power and Capacity Building** proposal of \$500,000 submitted as a joint proposal by Collective Justice, Community Passageways, Creative Justice, and CHOOSE180.
- 2) **BUILD People's Plan** proposal of \$500,000 submitted by Brother's United in Leadership Development (BUILD).

Initial awards will be made for the period of January 8, 2021, through December 31, 2022.

Collaborative Grantmaking RFP Overview

The Collaborative Grantmaking (CGM) RFP investment strategy is to address the harms created by and fund alternatives to the carceral state¹, while addressing the disproportionate impact of incarceration and policing on Black communities and families. The scope of work for selected grantees is twofold. Grantees will work to build a self-sustaining and community owned collective network² that is equipped to support

¹ All formal institutions of the criminal legal system and immigration system.

² A community of groups connected by a common bond, shared strategy, or similar mission.

those otherwise entangled by the carceral state. They will also work to build capacity throughout the network and propose alternatives to incarceration and policing.

We are utilizing the CGM process which allows for a democratic process to make funding decisions based on a collective shared analysis. This is an adapted version of the [Social Justice Fund's](#) primary model of grantmaking. Community member participants, guided by SOCR Policy staff, developed the request for proposals (RFP), screened and rated proposals, and made funding recommendations, including who to award, funding amounts, and contract duration. CGM participants include diverse community members that identify as Black, Indigenous, and people of color, queer, and gender nonconforming and work as anti-racist organizers. Some are employed at non-profit organizations and local government agencies addressing the harms of the carceral state and capitalism.

The goal of this innovative grantmaking model is to honor community wisdom and solutions in developing responses and investments. The CGM participants were informed that although their funding recommendations were subject to final determination by the Department Director, their recommendations would only be disrupted should there be clear evidence that it is not in the best interest of the City to enter into a contract with an organization.

The RFP was open for 4 weeks, posted on Friday, September 18, 2020 until October 19, 2020. SOCR held one information session on Wednesday, September 30, 2020. We also posted the information session power point presentation and Zoom recording to our website. SOCR worked with two consultants to provide technical assistance to applicants that had an operating budget of \$2 million or less. The consultants provided support to four applicants for a total of 30.5 hours.

All ten proposals received were eligible and forwarded to the CGM Participants to be read and rated individually, and then as a group.

CGM Participants’ Funding Recommendations

The CGM participant panel met on Thursday, October 22nd for rater training. Panel participants were given three weeks to review ten proposals. On Thursday, November 12th, SOCR met with the panel to discuss their final recommendations. SOCR also met with additional panelists on November 30, 2020, and December 1, 2020. At each meeting, the panelists discussed their review and ratings, deliberated on the award recipients and award amounts, and made final recommendations for Director Lockhart’s review. Please see their funding recommendations below.

CGM participant final funding recommendations:

Org/Coalition	Proposal	Score	Requested Amount	Recommended Amount
Collective Justice (PDA), Community Passageways, Creative Justice (RVC), and Choose 180	Collective Power and Capacity Building	94.8	\$500,000	\$500,000
BUILD	BUILD People’s Plan	86.8	\$550,000	\$500,000

CGM participants believe that these proposals, which received the two highest scores, should be awarded. They recommended that SOCR allocate half of the total \$1 million to each awardee over a two-year period, with the understanding that final allocation might depend on contract negotiations with each organization or coalition.

Grantee Descriptions

Collective Power and Capacity Building is a coalition of organizations including CHOOSE180, Collective Justice, Creative Justice, and Community Passageways. These organizations have come together to collectively reimagine, design, and implement community responses to harm. Three of the four organizations are Black-led, and all have an abolitionist framework and analysis which prioritizes Black liberation and Native Sovereignty. All four organizations, founded within the last decade, are led by people who have survived oppressive systems and who have a vision for community-led, -centered, and -driven solutions to heal communities and prevent harm.

This funding will permit all four organizations to increase capacity and staffing to continue their collective work, including Restorative Community Pathways (RCP), which is a community system of care that addresses the core needs of QT/BIPOC youth and families while dismantling/divesting from the current punitive and racially disparate criminal punishment system.

The Collective Power and Capacity Building proposal demonstrated an ability to meet the goals of the investment strategy and scope of work. Their proposal scored well overall in all four of the narrative responses. Some additional strengths include:

- Demonstrated commitment to collective power by submitting a joint proposal as a consortium.
- Demonstrated their commitment to and existing work for transformative and restorative justice through long-term healing practices and accountability to communities most impacted by the carceral state.
- Provided strong examples of establishing a safety net, building a mutual aid network, and a divestment/investment response.
- Demonstrated strong connection to the Black community and existing relationships with the Black community and BIPOC-led organizations.
- Demonstrated in their budget that all four organizations would be resourced by each getting a full-time equivalent (FTE) or staffing support.

Brothers United in Leadership Development (BUILD) is a grassroots organization with the vision that Black men are empowered leaders and mentors who make positive change in our community by instilling pride, hope, and perseverance in Black men. Over the past seven years, BUILD has developed a strong core group of Black male leaders who are deeply connected to their community and focus on grassroots organizing. Over this time, BUILD has developed strong community partnerships, provided 70 youth development trainings, hosted 25 community events, and engaged 100+ volunteers. This funding will go toward the creation of healing spaces for impacted communities, and to fund participants and facilitators.

BUILD scored well overall and participants saw value in the composition of their non-hierarchical leadership structure, which includes individuals who identify as Black and impacted by the carceral state. Some additional strengths include:

- Demonstrated strong connection to the Black community and existing relationships with the Black community and BIPOC-led organizations.
- Provided strong examples of how their proposal aligned with the investment strategy and scope of work, specifically around collective power.
- Demonstrated a strong interest and focus on trust, connection, and intersectionality with regard to building relationships with individuals impacted by the carceral state.
- Demonstrated their vision to create a People’s Plan that was centered around community, healing, and culture.

Participants discussed all ten proposals at the final recommendation meeting and focused on the proposals that scored a 75 or higher. Of those, participants did not recommend funding the following proposals:

Agency	Proposal	Score	Requested Amount
Freedom Project	Community Coalition	85	\$541,600
East African Community Services	The Promise Fellowship	76.4	\$500,000

Given the limited amount of funds available compared to funding requests, the participants recommend fully funding the top two proposals, rather than distributing smaller sums across more grantees. Participants expressed interest in reconvening to consider either increasing award amounts or funding more organizations that submitted competitive proposals, if SOCR were to again receive \$1.08 million for CGM in 2021.

Below is a summary of the discussion for the two proposals that scored at least a 75 or higher, the Freedom Project and East African Community Services.

Freedom Project

- Demonstrated a long history of working inside the prisons, strong connection to the Black community, and BIPOC-led organizations.
- Leadership make-up consists of members impacted by the carceral state.
- Their commitment to the investment strategy was unclear and it was unclear whether their proposal included a scope of work that shifts their work to just meet the funding ask.
- Lack of clarity around their strategies to develop media platforms and the long-term impact this would have in building the collective network.
- Lack of clarity about how the work would be distributed and the role of any partners.
- Lack of clarity around budget and how they would resource partner organizations and funding disbursement.

East African Community Services (EACS)

- Demonstrated strong connection to the Black community, specifically to the East African refugee and immigrant community.
- Provided strong strategies to support Black youth, specifically Black girls through their Strong Girls Powerful Leaders program.
- Written narrative did not clearly articulate proposed scope of work and how it was tied to the overall investment strategy.

- The investment strategy and scope of work would be a complete shift from EACS' current work and it was unclear whether they were shifting their work to just meet the funding ask.

The remaining proposals submitted by Pioneer Human Services, Urban Family Center Association, Community Connections Seattle (Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.), and Seattle Greenways, all received a score between 60 and 74. Participants expressed concern with the proposal's vision, a lack of clarity about organizational leadership, and lack of clarity for accountability and relationships with the Black community and/or individuals impacted by the carceral state. The remaining proposals for Project Be Free and R3 Community Services both scored below a 60 and ranked the lowest across all proposals. The participants noted areas of concern such as organization overview, race and social justice principles, and implementation of the investment strategy and scope of work.

Next Steps

We plan to inform the applicants of the results of their applications by **Friday, December 11, 2020**. The grantees will receive a notification of their grant awards that will be embargoed until **Friday, December 18, 2020**. The contract period will be from January 8, 2021, to December 31, 2022, with contract negotiation and development work beginning immediately after the award announcements are made public. Once 2020 CGM contracts are executed, we will then reconvene the CGM participants to determine disbursement of the reallocated CGM funds for 2021.