

# **Southeast Los Angeles (SELA) Water Policy & Environmental Justice Capacity Building Grant Fund**



## ***Request for Proposals***

### **1. About the SELA Water Policy & Environmental Justice Capacity Building Small Grant Fund**

The SELA Water Policy and Environmental Justice Capacity Building Small Grant Fund is a joint initiative of Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR-LA) and The Water Foundation to provide capacity-building support to organizations working with grassroots communities on the intersection of environmental justice and water policy development within the Southeast LA Cities area. This initiative is meant to expand efforts that identify and address water issues and their root causes in disadvantaged, frontline communities of Southeast LA as well as to create just transition solutions to our region's water quality and access challenges. The initiative will begin in Spring of 2019 and will continue through the end of 2019.

### **2. Project Goals and Scope of Services**

The primary goals of this initiative are to bring together a collective of local SELA leaders who represent community based organizations and elevate their efforts in 1) educating, training and/or partnering with grassroots community members, (2) building awareness of water quality issues such as water contamination in affected communities through popular education, media and strategic communication with health professionals, and (3) being part of a larger effort or campaign(s) that will increase environmental justice in water policy issues.

The selected partner organizations will be invited to collaborate with us and our network of physicians and health professionals to address the root causes of environmental injustice in water quality and access issues. By the end of the year, the projected outcomes are that the partner organizations will undergo a “Train the Trainer” series on various issues related to local water policies resulting in an increased capacity to advocate for and civically engage grassroots community members on water issues. The themes covered will be several, including but not limited to: the history of water in the Southern California region; existing statewide to local water policies; building a collective power analysis of influential legislators and policy makers; overview of existing and “solutioneering” of just transition and green water infrastructure ideas; and understanding of water toxics and inequitable health impacts caused by poor water quality and access.

The outcomes of this fund will be to ultimately ensure that community organizing groups in Southeast Los Angeles have a safe space to further their knowledge and strengthen their advocacy tools to inform community members about water issues in their neighborhoods. Our network also works with frontline communities across the region and state, and thus is seeking to engage SELA leaders in a broader frontline-led dialogue oriented towards building collective solutions to existing complex water challenges. By the end of the year, the initiative will stimulate greater education, training and civic engagement across the region, especially amongst Southeast cities’, South LA and East LA residents, community partners and health professionals. By strategically working together, the partner organizations may also be better positioned to advocate for equitable solutions with California elected officials and policymakers.

The grant award amount for accepted proposals will be \$25,000 per organization. Upon acceptance, grantees will be asked to sign a scope of work as well as to identify a minimum of two to three organizational representatives who can complete a 4- to 6-week training course. Organizations will also be asked to identify how the training will be applied to their existing or planned work for 2019.

### **3. Anticipated Grantee Selection & Program Schedule**

We will be accepting applications from April 15, 2019 through May 1, 2019. Other important benchmarks are as follows:

*April 15 - 25, 2019 -- Open for submission*

*Early May 2019 -- Grantee Interview and Selection Process*

*May to June 2019 -- Start of Capacity Building Training Sessions*

*June to October 2019 – Joint Project/Campaign Development and Launch*

*October to November 2019 Regional Water Symposium with leaders we seek to influence*

*December 2019 – Collective Evaluation and Planning for 2020, if applicable*

## 4. Submission of Proposals

Send proposals of no more than 4 pages (minimum font size 11) through this Online Submission [LINK](#) by May 1, 11pm (PST).

Short link: <http://bit.ly/2lqXnpE>

Please direct any questions to [lhernandez@psr-la.org](mailto:lhernandez@psr-la.org) with Subject Line: SELA Water RFP.

## 5. Elements of Proposal

### *I. Background and Alignment with Initiative (1-2 paragraphs)*

Please state your organization's vision and mission and how it aligns with the goals and projected outcomes of this grant funding. How can this initiative meet some of your key organizational needs in 2019? Feel free to also refer to the mission of The Water Foundation, PSR-LA and this RFP for guidance. Please refer to projected work timeline above as well.

### *II. Goals and Objectives (3-4 paragraphs)*

Explain what you hope to accomplish through your participation in this initiative. If you have an existing campaign, project or program, clearly describe it and state how this initiative will fit with your project's main goals and objectives. How will this initiative be applied to your organizational work?

### *III. Community Organizing and Civic Engagement Efforts (2-3 paragraphs)*

How does your organization use community organizing and/or civic engagement models to advance your organizational mission? How will this initiative help advance the ability of your constituents to tangibly make progress towards their goals? Please feel free to describe your base of leaders with whom you work, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

### *IV. Your Analysis of Water Challenges in SELA (3-4 paragraphs)*

Please describe what aspect of water policy affects the people with whom you work and what do you currently see as the most pressing issue(s) that need to be addressed to bring about institutional or systemic change in Southeast LA. These issues can be capacity building needs and other needs within your organization, your community or your city. What do you see as the biggest blocks to ensuring environmental justice in water-related issues in SELA?

### *V. Team Description (3-4 paragraphs)*

Please describe your team members and their roles and responsibilities during the duration of this initiative. How long have you been working together? And how can our training series and/or overall initiative best meet your team needs?

#### *VI. Foreseeable Challenges (1-2 paragraphs)*

Please describe any projected challenges you foresee in the implementation of this grant. How do you plan to overcome these challenges? And what support can we provide, if appropriate, to help meet these challenges?

### **7. Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluation team will look for all or a combination of these qualities in the accepted proposals:

- Prospective grantee's alignment of goals and purpose with this initiative. Does not have to have a strong history of working on water issues, but must show a demonstrated commitment to building capacity in water issues, specifically.
- Must work directly with grassroots residents and communities in Southeast LA.
- Must currently use community organizing and/or civic engagement models of leadership development. If not currently using these models, a description of your understanding of these models and how they differ from your current models will be helpful as well as your planned commitment to apply these models to your future work.
- Demonstrated capacity (ie. adequate staffing, member/community base, space...etc.,) to roll out workshops and community engagement projects. Once the train the trainer series is completed, the scope of services will involve using elements of the training with your membership/constituency.
- An understanding of social justice and environmental justice principles and a demonstrated commitment to building this if not already.

### **8. Questions about the Initiative**

- How long is the project period?

The project period will last through the end of 2019. Depending on various factors, such as interest, capacity and political alignment, the initiative sponsors will look to securing and sustaining additional financial support for the long-term.

- What is the grant amount for partner organizations?

The grant amount is \$25,000 per organization. The grant funds are meant to be used to cover staff or member leader expenses, including travel to and from trainings and compensation of time.

- What does the capacity building training sessions entail?

The training will be completed using traditional education pedagogies with staff and guest lecturers, guest panels and a potential tour or local travel. The training team consists of PSR staff and other partners such as academic and health professional partners. Popular education, interactive methods will also be used. Partners will be supplied with all training materials. The training schedule will roughly be held one to two days a week at various sites including in Southeast LA, South LA and at PSR-LA's office in downtown LA. The schedule will be finalized once partners are selected and timelines are aligned across all partners. Overall, the training consists of roughly 25-30 hours plus a handful of field trips and one-on-one sessions. The training topics will cover the topics mentioned in the description found in Section 2 above.

- What geography will this Initiative cover?

This initiative will roughly cover the roughly the following Southeast cities and communities: Bell, Bell Gardens, Commerce, Compton, Cudahy, Huntington Park, Lynwood, Maywood, Paramount, South Gate and Vernon. It also includes the unincorporated communities of East Los Angeles, Florence, Rancho Dominguez and East Compton.

*Additional questions can be emailed to [lhernandez@psr-la.org](mailto:lhernandez@psr-la.org) with the Subject Line: SELA Water RFP.*

## **9. About the Fund Initiative Sponsors**

Physicians for Social Responsibility Los Angeles (PSR-LA) is a 501(c)(3) organization committed to changing policies that affects all communities in Los Angeles, but in particular, low-income communities at the frontline of the health impacts felt by environmental injustice. PSR-LA advocates for policies and practices that improve public health, eliminate nuclear and environmental threats, and address health disparities through various avenues, but with community engagement at the center of our work. PSR-LA also work closely with coalitions made up of community based organizations to organize and create policy change that will hold polluters and decision makers accountable.

The Water Foundation is a nonprofit strategic philanthropy working to transform how water is managed in the west by sharing resources, contributing expertise and building relationships. The Water Foundation aligns philanthropic funding to support groups that are finding smart ways to improve water management across California. By working with PSR-LA, The Water

Foundation seeks to achieve their mission of collaboration, sharing and contributing expertise and resources as well as building relationships amongst communities in South East LA.