

Social Innovation Fund FY 2015 Grant Competition

*2015 Notice of Federal Funding Availability
(NOFA) webinar transcript*

Corporation for
NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY SERVICE  | SOCIAL
INNOVATION
FUND

Finding what works. Making it work for more people.

Note:

This document is a transcript of a webinar covering the 2015 Social Innovation Fund Notice of Federal Funding Availability (NOFA). It has been very lightly edited for print, and is presented in a conversational, rather than a formal tone. For official guidance. Please see the NOFA.

Hello, and welcome to the 2015 Social Innovation Fund Grant Competition Overview. We appreciate your interest in the Social Innovation Fund, otherwise known as the SIF.

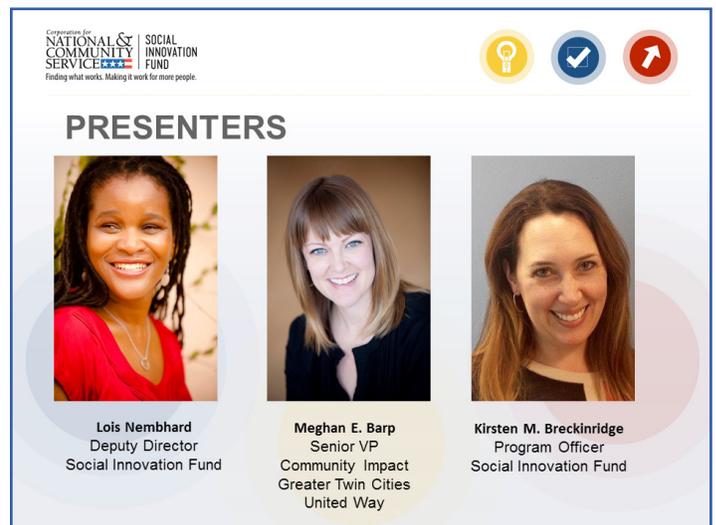


We'll start by introducing the presenters, then explain how the SIF works. That will be followed by a representative from a current grantee giving her perspective on being part of the SIF. Then we will provide you with details about the competition.

I am Lois Nembhard, Deputy Director of the Social Innovation Fund, and I will present about the SIF.

I will be followed by Meghan Barp, Senior VP for Community Impact at the Greater Twin Cities United Way, a SIF grantee since 2012.

Meghan will be followed by Kirsten Breckinridge, a SIF program officer, who will provide you with details of the grant competition.









Purpose of this Webinar

1. Provide an overview of the SIF and its requirements
2. Highlight key aspects of the 2015 Notice of Federal Funding Availability
3. Help you determine if this is the right opportunity for your organization or your constituents

Note: We will be summarizing requirements; you must read the NOFA and the application instructions for detailed instructions

#SIFund 4

Our intent today is to provide you with information on the SIF and our grant competition to help you determine if this is the right opportunity for your organization and, if so, to encourage you to explore further.

It's important to note that it will be imperative for you to read the NOFA and application instructions in order to have all the information necessary to submit a competitive grant application. We're just skimming the surface today.

The Corporation for National and Community Service, or CNCS, is an independent agency, meaning that we're funded directly by Congress and don't fall under one of the larger federal agencies.

We're most known for service and volunteerism programs, such as AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, and Senior Corps. And we're the largest grant maker in support of service and volunteerism. The SIF was created in 2009, when the Corporation for National and Community Service was reauthorized with bipartisan support, something that's very important to us. So we're a relatively young program.







About the Corporation for National & Community Service

- Independent federal agency
- Dedicated to improving lives and strengthening communities by fostering civic engagement through service and volunteering, and identifying and scaling effective solutions to community challenges
- The nation's largest grantmaker in support of service and volunteering; engages more than five million Americans annually in service to their communities through programs such as Senior Corps and AmeriCorps

#SIFund 5







The Social Innovation Fund

CREATED BY THE BIPARTISAN PASSAGE OF 2009
EDWARD M. KENNEDY SERVE AMERICA ACT






#SIFund 6

This slide includes a picture of when the bill, the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, was signed into law.

Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE | SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.

ABOUT SIF

The Social Innovation Fund (SIF) is a key White House initiative and program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

SIF combines public and private resources to grow the impact of innovative, community-based solutions that have compelling evidence of improving the lives of people in low-income communities throughout the United States.

#SIFund

Lois Nembhard: The Social Innovation Fund is one of six tiered evidence initiatives across the federal government.

Our purpose is simply stated on this slide, to grow the impact of prospective solutions to community challenges so they can improve the lives of more people, with a particular focus on those living in low-income, under-resourced communities.

Why the SIF? These two quotations capture why the Social Innovation Fund and similar efforts are necessary. There are many instances of community challenges being effectively addressed across the country, it's just usually at a relatively small scale.

There's a role for governments to play in identifying and growing these effective approaches rather than funding programs that either, A, studies suggest are not effective; or, B, studies haven't been conducted to determine whether they are effective or not.

In a time of dwindling resources and increasing needs it's imperative that all funders, whether they be individuals, philanthropy, the corporate sector, or government, focus our precious resources only on what we know is truly making a difference in people's lives.

Through our approach, we're encouraging the social sector to look beneath the surface of the myriad programs out there. A key question is when you look behind the wonderful intentions of the one-off success stories, is there actual evidence of success?

Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE | SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.

Why the SIF?

"The bottom line is clear: **solutions to America's challenges** are being developed every day at the **grass roots** – and government shouldn't be supplanting those efforts, it should be **supporting those efforts**.

"Instead of wasting taxpayer money on programs that are obsolete or ineffective, government should be seeking out **creative, results-oriented** programs ... and helping them **replicate their efforts** across America."

-President Obama, June 30, 2009

#SIFund

So how do we do this? This slide depicts the different elements of the SIF approach; grant-makers, innovation, match, evidence, scale, and knowledge sharing.

Experienced grantmakers form the foundation of our approach. We select them competitively and rely on them to identify the innovative solutions and select the nonprofit organizations, referred to as the grantees, that will implement those solutions. Kirsten will define “innovation” a little bit later.

Both the grantmakers and the subgrantees are required to match the funds they receive. The innovative solutions or the programs that the nonprofits implement must have documented evidence of effectiveness. This evidence falls along a continuum from preliminary to strong. While part of the SIF, these programs are required to be rigorously evaluated to further assess effectiveness. Also, while part of the SIF, these programs are grown to serve more individuals.

And finally, we’re committed to knowledge-sharing. We’ll share the results of the evaluations, and we’ll also share what we’re learning from the work the intermediaries and subgrantees are doing for the benefit of the social sector and beyond.



We have three focus areas; youth development, economic opportunity, and healthy futures.

Youth development is a broad focus area, ranging from cradle to young adulthood. This description, as well as the descriptions for the other focus areas, are intentionally broad to be all-encompassing.

Some of the outcomes we're funding include reading proficiency, college enrollment and retention, employment of youth. And activities that might also fall under this focus area include successful outcomes for children, aging out of foster care, and improving outcomes for youth involved in the juvenile justice system, just to give you an idea of the possible breadth of this area.

Cooperation for NATIONAL & SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND
COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.



Youth Development Focus Area



Preparing America's youth for success in school, active citizenship, productive work, and healthy and safe lives

#SIFund 11

Cooperation for NATIONAL & SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND
COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.



Economic Opportunity Focus Area



Increasing economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged individuals

#SIFund 12

As the slide describes, economic opportunity is all about increasing economic opportunities for the economically disadvantaged, and these could be youth or adults.

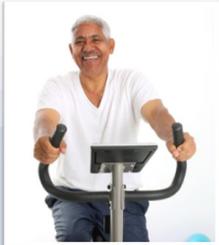
Outcomes might be related to job attainment and retention, building wealth, for our youth or adults.

The healthy futures focus area encompasses activities aimed at improving health outcomes for youth and adults or funding programs in the HIV/AIDS arena, programs looking at health, and behavioral outcomes for those who have moved into supportive housing, programs trying to reduce tobacco use and obesity.

Cooperation for NATIONAL & SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND
COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.



Healthy Futures Focus Area

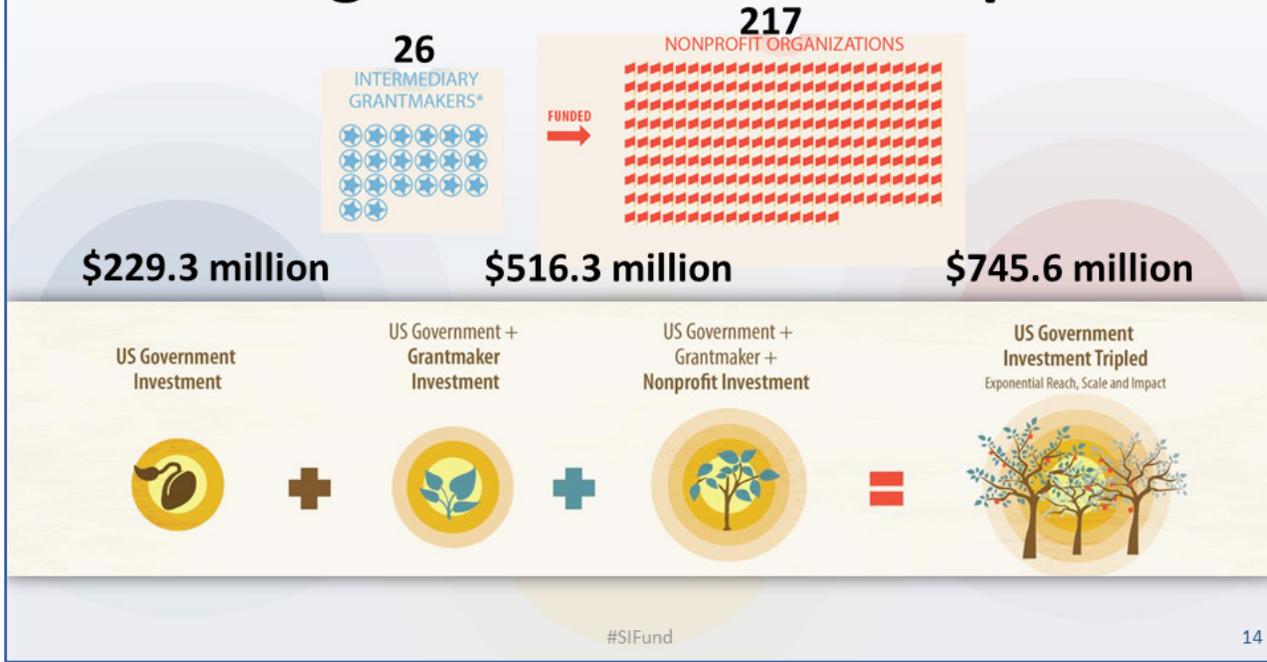


Promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing the risk factors that can lead to illness

#SIFund 13



Growing investment and impact



We're currently funding 26 intermediaries who, in turn, are funding 217 nonprofit organizations or subgrantees. The intermediaries funded last year currently are in the process of selecting their subgrantees, so the 217 will grow.

We have awarded \$229 million, which has grown to \$745 million when the match from the intermediaries and subgrantees is included. So we've, in essence, tripled the U.S. government investment in identifying, evaluating, and scaling evidence-based solutions to community challenges.



What It Takes To Be Successful

- Committed and involved board and leadership
- Flexibility and willingness to change and adapt
- Strong fundraising expertise and capacity
- Capacity to plan and execute an open grant competition
- Development of capacity in:
 - Federal grants management
 - Oversight and management of subgrantees
 - Evaluation

These are just a few ideas of what it takes to be successful. These are lofty goals and this isn't easy money. So it's critical that board and other leadership of the organization are committed at the application stage and remain involved throughout the program.

One can't anticipate what it will take to do this, particularly if you're new to federal funding. So flexibility and willingness to change and adapt is important.

And it probably goes without saying, but strong fundraising expertise and capacity is imperative, not just to meet your match requirements but because you will need to support your subgrantees in their fundraising efforts as well.

We expect our intermediaries to be experienced grantmakers, but many of them haven't had to run truly open competitions before, so the ability to reach out beyond your existing network is important.

And you will need to develop strong capacity using staff and/or consultants in federal grant management, oversight and management of grantees, including the provision of training and technical assistance and evaluation.

A benefit of our program, according to current intermediaries, is how one's evaluation capacity strengthens, but that takes an investment of time and resources.

I'll now turn things over to Meghan Barp from the Greater Twin Cities United Way to provide her perspective.

Meghan Barp: Thank you, Lois. First let me just say how grateful we are for the Social Innovation Fund grant that we have here at Greater Twin Cities United Way. And I will say that we have a fairly unique Social Innovation Fund within the youth development portfolio.

We applied in partnership with Generation Next, which is essentially the Minneapolis-St. Paul version of a Strive Network or that cradle-to-career infrastructure. And so while we're geographically based within that youth development component, we are really kind of aligned with a variety of different goals across the youth development continuum, so things like are kids ready for kindergarten, are they reading by grade level at third grade, are they graduated from high school, et cetera.

I think one of the things that Social Innovation Fund potential applicants need to consider is should we hone in on one area that we really want to improve for our community or should we think about this continuum along the way? And so we're a little bit unique, I would say, within that particular arena. In terms of the work of why we thought the Social Innovation Fund would be a good fit for us here at United Way, I think you touched upon a couple of key things that really created an appealing landscape for us, and one is we are a 100-year-old agency that has deep expertise in the community around grantmaking and around managing funds in a really meaningful way. So we have a really good vantage point in our community of the key players, of the key partners, of people that would be a really good fit to really move this work forward.

That was sort of the number one opportunity for us. We also felt very strongly that we could actually embrace the essence of the Social Innovation Fund and have the dollars available to really infuse in the programs that had strong evidence to really test those and figure out if they would be a good fit for scale or for taking the strategies from these programs and sharing them with other organizations and other partners. So the essence of SIF was really, really appealing to us.

We also really like the idea that what happens in a local community was being supported on the federal scale. So this network of other Social Innovation Fund recipients and the capacity-building support provided by CNCS and the Social Innovation Fund have absolutely been instrumental in our success. It's this amazing network of colleagues around the country who are helping support this work, and that was clear from the very beginning of when we were applying for this funding.

In terms of some of the early kind of outputs and outcomes from the SIF investment, you know, I think what was great for us is there was a lot of energy and excitement within the community. We were able to select six really strong subgrantees and work with them in-depth around their own capacity to take on federal funds.

And I would also say for our own grantmaking, while this is ultimately a one-million-dollar investment per year, we manage over \$60 million of funds, and the SIF work has really been instrumental in shaping how we're thinking about our investments moving forward, and how we're taking some of those elements of evidence and sharing best practices and capacity-building into our overall grantmaking.



GRANTEE PERSPECTIVE

Meghan E. Barp
Senior VP Community
Impact
Greater Twin Cities United
Way



Cooperation for
NATIONAL & SOCIAL
COMMUNITY INNOVATION
SERVICE FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.



GRANTEE PERSPECTIVE

Meghan E. Barp
 Senior VP Community
 Impact
 Greater Twin Cities United
 Way



So one example is we're currently making investments in our education portfolio. This has deeply shaped the way that we've thought about our general work here. It's moving the needle on a lot of things around the community that's been really exciting for us to think about and to embrace within this work.

Because of our partnership with Generation Next, I would say that one of the benefits is that our subgrantees are part of these community-wide networks. So they're six-strong; however, they're part of these bigger community networks of many, many grantees and community partners who are thinking about these issues.

So it's giving us this kind of pilot ground to think about how do we take those best practices and move them forward for other organizations. It's almost like theft of good ideas; we want to make sure that we're sharing the best practices and ideas so that everyone in the community can benefit from the good work of the Social Innovation Fund.

Finally, I would say, as potential grantees consider taking on the Social Innovation Fund, we thought very deeply about whether or not this was the right fit for us. This is our first federal grant here at Greater Twin Cities United Way, and before we really submitted that application we did a really deep dive into a few things.

One is we wanted to make sure that we would have compliance nailed. I cannot understate the value of understanding your organization's

capacity for compliance, both from a financial perspective but also from a programmatic perspective, because not only are you responsible for your own compliance, you're also responsible for the success of your subgrantees' compliance.

We hired a local firm here, Clifton, Larson, Allen, to help us go through that work to make sure that we were fit to really kind of take this on and determine, ultimately, that we were.

It was also critical for us to get buy-in from our board of directors, buy-in from my colleagues on the senior team. We really wanted to make sure that people understood the potential benefit and, you know, some of the things that we'd really have to grow here at United Way to take on.

Also not to be understated is the fundraising component, the match that's required. We really looked closely at our own capacity for match, which we had in place. We also looked closely at the potential for our subgrantees and their ability to sustain that match.

And we're fortunate enough that we have a fund within our overall grantmaking portfolio that we set aside, but we know that for many communities this is a challenge based on either the size of your community or the amount of funders that are available.

And so we really were thoughtful about how did we engage the broader philanthropic community to say, "Hey, we're taking this on, there's a match requirement, we're expecting it to be up to five years; is this something that you could really sign onto for the greater good of our community so that everyone has access to make this a success?"

We've been fortunate to have those early up-front conversations about commitments so that we have everyone on the same page. And we're thoughtful about continuing to give updates to that group of funders so that they know the progress to-date and that they're continuing to support not only the match of United Way but also the match of the subgrantees. So that's really been something that's been successful for us and instrumental, in our success.



Why Apply: Grantees' Perspective

- **Double your dollars.** Hard to find dollars for evaluation and scale.
- **Be part of something bigger,** a family of pioneers demanding impact.
- Get access to **bright minds and bold thinkers** through Knowledge Network & gatherings.
- Opportunity for the White House and CNCS to **amplify your work on a national scale.**
- SIF's platform and rigor provides **"seal of approval"** and validation.
- Program Officers and evaluation experts are **partners in your success.** One on one consulting and ongoing technical assistance.
- Entrée to new local, state and **federal partnerships and funding.**
- A chance for your program to **become a national model.**

#SIFund

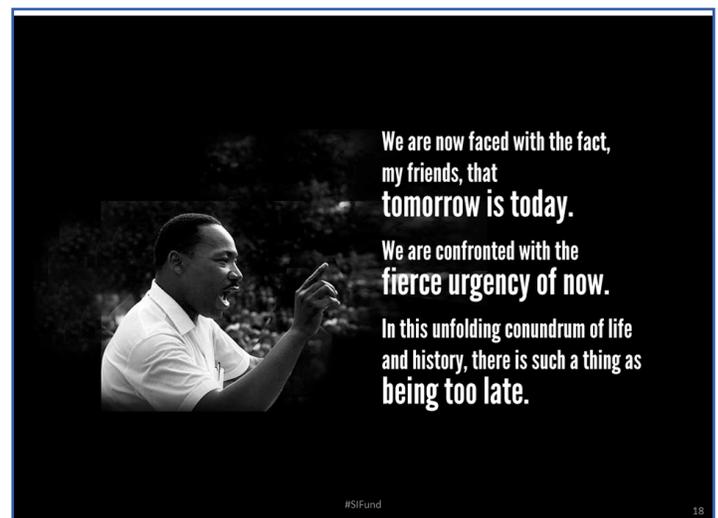
17

Lois Nembhard: This slide mentions other reasons grantees have shared for why the SIF made sense for their organizations. In particular, I'll highlight the fact that we fund evaluation.

Everyone agrees it's important but not everyone wants to fund it. I would really like to emphasize that being part of this network of intermediaries has been particularly beneficial in providing great support and assistance.

This quotation captures a core belief of ours here at the SIF: *There is a fierce urgency of now*, because it is possible to be too late. It's possible to be too late, because we all know that there are negative long-term outcomes if certain milestones aren't reached during childhood, or children from disadvantaged circumstances and those involved in the justice system don't receive the proper guidance and support, or if healthy habits aren't learned, and the list goes on and on.

So if we can get an individual into the right effective program rather than a nice but ineffective program, it can change the outcome of their life.



18



I'll now turn it over to Kirsten to describe the NOFA.

Kirstin Breckinridge: Thanks, Lois. As Lois said, I'm going to tell you now about the 2015 Notice of Funding Availability, or NOFA, our version of an RFP.

The 2015 budget provides the SIF with about \$51 million for grantmaking. This includes grants for both new and continuing SIF grantees.

Applicants may apply for grants ranging from one to ten million dollars a year. For programs striving to make significant impacts, we would expect to see grant requests in the three to four million dollars and up range.

SIF grants are for a five-year period and selected grantees are likely going to be receiving their first three years of funding up front, with funding for additional years available pending appropriation and successful implementation.

In terms of important dates, we're encouraging organizations to submit notice of intent to apply by February 20th.

Please note that this is not required but it is encouraged, because it helps us to plan for our review process. Applications are due March 17th by 5:00 p.m. Eastern, and this is a hard deadline.

We will be alerting successful applicants of our decision in July.

Let's review some of the eligibility requirements.

To be eligible you must be either an existing grantmaking institution or in an eligible partnership with a grantmaking institution included. In eligible partnerships the partner organizations will share responsibilities under the award.

When we talk about a grantmaking institution, we essentially mean that grantmaking is an essential part of what you do, not an ancillary activity.

Also, to be aligned with the SIF principles, you need to have a track record of using evidence to select grantees or as a part of your grantee investment.

Eligibility

- **Existing grantmaking institutions**
 - In existence at the time of the application
 - Grants to nonprofit community organizations or programs is an **essential** rather than a collateral means of fulfilling mission and vision
 - Track record of using rigorous evidence to select and invest in grantees
- **Eligible partnerships**
 - Formal relationship between an existing grantmaking institution and an additional grantmaking institution, a State Commission on National and Community Service, or a chief executive officer of a unit of general local government

#SIFund 20

Eligibility (cont.)

- **Note:**
 - A unit of government is not considered to be an existing grantmaking institution. A unit of general local government may *participate* in an eligible partnership; other units of government may *collaborate* with an existing grantmaking institution or eligible partnership
 - A university is not considered an existing grantmaking institution, but may *collaborate* with an existing grantmaking institution or an eligible partnership
 - Nonprofit service providers who are not also experienced grantmakers are not eligible to be intermediaries

#SIFund 21

A unit of government is not considered to be an existing grantmaking institution; however, a local unit of government may participate in an eligible partnership, it just cannot apply without a grantmaking partner.

The same goes for universities; they can make very valuable partners but are not eligible as the lead applicants.

We also received inquiries from nonprofit service providers that have a great model that they'd like to replicate using grants; however, if you are not an existing and experienced grantmaker already you're not eligible as a lead applicant. You could, however, apply as a partner.

As Lois mentioned, innovation is a key part of the SIF. We define innovation as a way of solving a problem that is faster, cheaper, more efficient, or produces a better outcome.

We will expect for you to tell us how your solution or the solutions subgrantees bring are better than what is already occurring in communities of need.

Innovative Approaches Wanted

New ways to solve old problems that are faster, cost-effective, data-driven and lead to **better results** for the public good

#SIFund 22






Types of SIFs

Geographically-Based Social Innovation Fund
Serves low-income communities within a specific local geographic area, and focuses on improving measurable outcomes in one or more of the three focus areas

Issue-Based Social Innovation Fund
Serves low-income communities within multiple geographic areas, and focuses on improving measurable outcomes in one of the three focus areas

#SIFund 23

As a part of your application, you will need to identify what type of SIF you are. What does this mean? You can either be a geographically-based or an issue-based SIF program. An example of a geographically-based SIF is Greater Twin Cities United Way. They are focused on the Greater Twin Cities area but are specifically looking at education and other youth outcomes.

So, essentially you need to be focused on the specific identified geographic region, but you could focus on a single outcome or on multiple different issue areas. Alternatively, you can choose a single issue area but propose to serve in a number of different locations, this could be statewide or even across the country.

These key requirements are aligned with the key elements of the SIF that Lois discussed earlier and I'll go into greater detail now. We will be looking for applicants to address each of these in their application.






Key Requirements

- Match
- Subgranting
- Growing Subgrantee Impact
- Evidence and Evaluation

#SIFund 24

The matching requirement: SIF requires a one-to-one cash match. Applicants must demonstrate that they have 50% of the first year's annual match on hand at the time of application. If you're applying for a two-million-dollar-a-year grant you need to have one million dollars of that money available when you apply.






The Matching Requirement

- Dollar-for-dollar cash, non-federal match required of both intermediaries and subgrantees
- At time of application, must demonstrate ability to meet 50 percent of first year's match requirement
- Strong capacity and commitment to assist subgrantees with fundraising

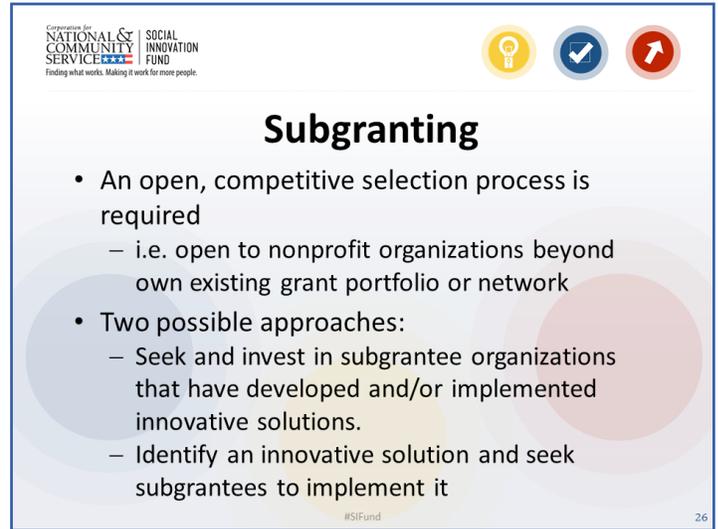
#SIFund 25

Refer to the NOFA on how to submit letters confirming you have this match. Subgrantees must also meet the one-to-one cash match requirement. You also will be asked to discuss how you will meet the match requirement going forward in terms of fundraising for yourself, and also how you will help your subgrantees in their fundraising. It's an arduous task and we want to make sure selected grantees are up for the challenge.

Let's talk now about subgranting. SIF requires an open competition for subgrantees.

You must issue a brand new RFP with awarded SIF funds. Programs that you currently fund may apply, but you cannot limit the RFP only to organizations that are in current networks or portfolios. You have to allow other organizations to apply as well.

There are two approaches to subgranting. You can either look for organizations who will propose their own innovative interventions or you could apply for SIF funding with an identified innovative intervention that you have and then seek nonprofit organizations who will implement or replicate this intervention.

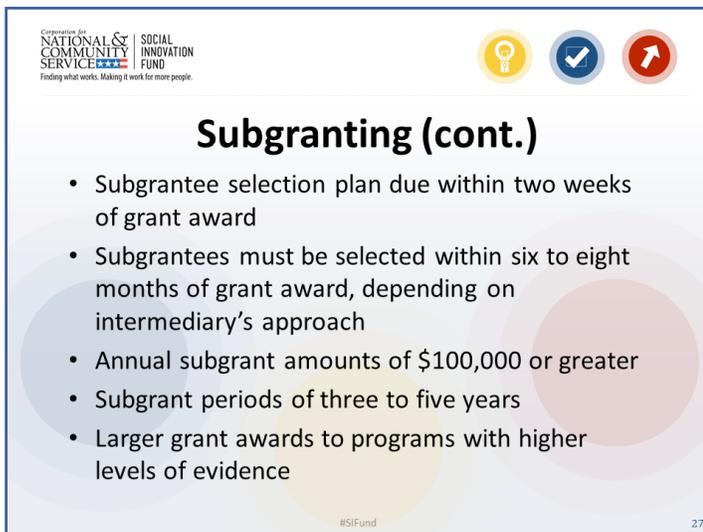


Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.

Subgranting

- An open, competitive selection process is required
 - i.e. open to nonprofit organizations beyond own existing grant portfolio or network
- Two possible approaches:
 - Seek and invest in subgrantee organizations that have developed and/or implemented innovative solutions.
 - Identify an innovative solution and seek subgrantees to implement it

#SIFund 26



Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.

Subgranting (cont.)

- Subgrantee selection plan due within two weeks of grant award
- Subgrantees must be selected within six to eight months of grant award, depending on intermediary's approach
- Annual subgrant amounts of \$100,000 or greater
- Subgrant periods of three to five years
- Larger grant awards to programs with higher levels of evidence

#SIFund 27

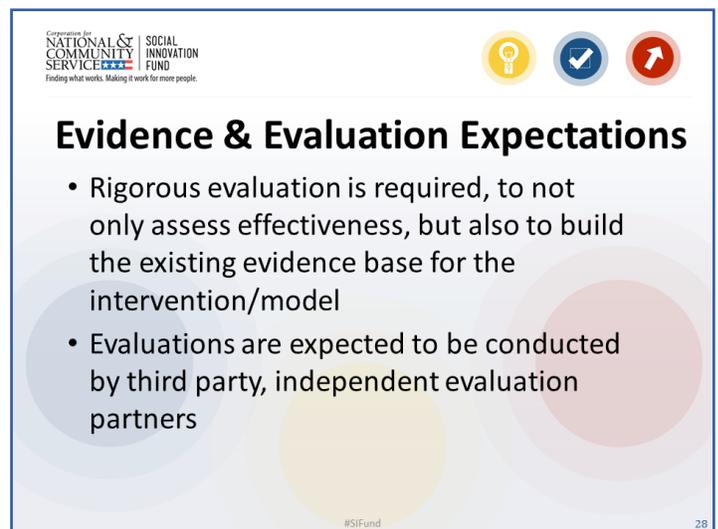
Selected applicants will need to be ready to hit the ground running. Subgrantee selection plans are due soon after the award and the selection process must be completed within six to eight months, so it's a pretty tight turnaround.

Also, and this is very important, subgrants must be at least \$100,000 a year, so when matched, you're looking at a \$200,000 per year program budget for each subgrantee. They must be for a period of three to five years.

If you are selecting subgrantees with their own interventions, we expect that you will give larger awards to those who have higher levels of evidence for their program work.

Evidence and evaluation: The SIF sees evaluation as a crucial, if not critical, component of what we do. Evaluation is a tool for proving and improving programs, so we encourage and support a learning approach to programming and evaluation.

Successful applicants will need to show that they have the capacity to comply with our requirements. Please note that third-party evaluations are required to meet the SIF expectations.



Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.

Evidence & Evaluation Expectations

- Rigorous evaluation is required, to not only assess effectiveness, but also to build the existing evidence base for the intervention/model
- Evaluations are expected to be conducted by third party, independent evaluation partners

#SIFund 28

Cooperation for NATIONAL & SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.

Evidence & Evaluation Expectations

- Achieve moderate or strong evidence of impact by the end of the grant
- CNCS assesses the evidence level of interventions identified in the intermediary's applications
- Intermediaries are expected to assess evidence level of the interventions they select

#SIFund 29

This slide outlines the SIF's evaluation requirement. All interventions funded must have at least preliminary evidence as they enter the SIF, they must complete an evaluation design that targets moderate or strong levels of evidence by the end of the grant period.

CNCS will be assessing the evidence level of the interventions proposed and will also be providing technical assistance throughout this process.

So I talked before about different levels of evidence, and I want now to review our definition. I'll show you sort of how this works.

Cooperation for NATIONAL & SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.

Evidence Framework (Summary)

Preliminary	Moderate	Strong
Program model is supported by theoretical framework and/or previous research	Evaluations that support causal conclusions but cannot be generalized beyond the study group	Completed evaluation(s) that support causal conclusions with large range of participants or multiple evaluations supporting the same conclusion
Minimum level of evidence required to receive SIF funding	Each evaluation must achieve at least moderate by the end of the grant	

#SIFund 30

Preliminary

Program model is supported by theoretical framework and/or previous research

Minimum level of evidence required to receive SIF funding

For preliminary evidence, a program model must be supported by a theoretical framework and/or have previous research that supports the fact that it works. As I said before, all programs funded by the SIF must meet the minimum level of preliminary evidence to receive SIF funding.

Next is moderate, and so to meet moderate levels of evidence the program intervention must have evaluations that support causal conclusions, but those conclusions can't be generalized beyond the study group.

Moderate

Evaluations that support causal conclusions but cannot be generalized beyond the study group

Each evaluation must achieve at least moderate by the end of the grant

This graphic is a vertical rectangle with a blue header containing the word 'Moderate'. Below the header, there is a light blue box with the text 'Evaluations that support causal conclusions but cannot be generalized beyond the study group'. At the bottom, there is a pink rounded rectangle containing the text 'Each evaluation must achieve at least moderate by the end of the grant'.

Strong

Completed evaluation(s) that support causal conclusions with large range of participants or multiple evaluations supporting the same conclusion

This graphic is a vertical rectangle with a blue header containing the word 'Strong'. Below the header, there is a light blue box with the text 'Completed evaluation(s) that support causal conclusions with large range of participants or multiple evaluations supporting the same conclusion'.

Programs with strong levels of evidence are those that have conducted evaluations that support causal conclusions, with a large range of participants or multiple evaluations supporting the same conclusions, so they can be generalized across the population.

Our review process is outlined further in the NOFA. Applications that meet our eligibility requirements will go through an expert review, conducted by professionals from social innovation, long time service providers, academics, and grantmakers to review the applications.

Next, the top applications will move on to an internal staff review.

During the period of clarification, finalists may receive requests for additional information or clarification on some of the content in their application.

Please note that participation and clarification does not guarantee grantee selection. Final decisions are made by senior leadership and the CEO of the Corporation, and grantees who are selected will be notified in July.

Corporation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE | SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND

Review Process

- Expert Review
- Internal Review
- Clarifications (if necessary)
- Final Decision
- Notification
- Grant Award

#SIFund

This graphic is a slide titled 'Review Process'. It features the Corporation for National & Community Service and Social Innovation Fund logos at the top. The slide lists six steps of the review process: Expert Review, Internal Review, Clarifications (if necessary), Final Decision, Notification, and Grant Award. There are three circular icons at the top right: a yellow lightbulb, a blue checkmark, and a red arrow. The slide number '31' is in the bottom right corner.

Cooperation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE | SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.

Key Documents & Resources

www.nationalservice.gov/SIF

Click on: **2015 Notice of Funding Availability**

- **NOFA and application instructions**
- **Frequently Asked Questions**
- **Quick guides**
- **Link to previous successful applications**

#SIFund

I encourage you to go to our website for more information and some very helpful resources, particularly resources on evaluation and budgeting for the SIF.

Also, please look over the applications of our successful grantees, like Greater Twin Cities United Way, these can be helpful to you as you think through your own approach, budget, and program components.

We will be updating this website with webinars and frequently asked questions throughout the application period.

If you have questions about the SIF application process, please reach us via e-mail at SIFApplication@cns.gov or by the phone number listed.

You can also register to receive updates about the application at the website listed.

We hope this document is useful to you as you consider applying for a Social Innovation Fund grant. Please do contact us if you have questions.

Cooperation for NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE | SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND
Finding what works. Making it work for more people.

How to Reach Us

Email: SIFApplication@cns.gov

Voicemail: 202.606.3223

Updates: Sign up at www.nationalservice.gov/sif

#SIFund