

**Corporation for National and Community Service**

**2010 Social Innovation Fund**

**Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky**

**Reviewer Comments – Phase 2**

## SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND 2010 EVALUATION CONSENSUS FORM

*Instructions throughout this form are indicated in red.*

**Before you begin, please fill out the Applicant Name and Application ID# in the above header.** This Evaluation Consensus Form (ECF) is where each panel records its consensus assessment of an application. The completion of this form may be led by any panelist; that individual will be designated the Lead Reviewer (LR). All Reviewers are expected to serve as the LR on at least two applications. **The evaluation consensus assessment should be based on the panel's examination of only the subcategories highlighted in red in the chart below, *not* the full application. In addition, Evaluation Reviewers should only assess how well applicants responded to the *specific evidence-based criteria* within the subcategories highlighted in yellow in this form.**

Category	Percentage	Subcategories
Program Design	45%	A. Goals and Objectives B. Use of Evidence C. Community Resources D. Description of Activities i. Subgranting ii. Technical Assistance and Support
Organizational Capacity	35%	A. Ability to Provide Program Oversight B. Ability to Provide Fiscal Oversight
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	20%	A. Budget and Program Design B. Match Sources

Panels will utilize Panel Consensus Calls to discuss each application and come to agreement on the content of the Narrative Assessment for each category, the Rating for each category, the Overall Appraisal Statement and the Band in which the application will be placed. When completing this form, the LR should rely on four primary documents: 1) the application being reviewed; 2) the SIF Review Notes page from each panelist; 3) the SIF Notice of Federal Funds Availability (NOFA); 4) the Consensus Rubric at the end of this form.

**Please complete the following steps:**

1. For each of the 3 categories the LR should:
  - a. **Write a 3 – 5 sentence Narrative Assessment** reflecting the panel's assessment of the quality of the response in the category being assessed; it is important that this narrative include brief summary information, but more importantly, the panel's evaluation of the application's quality.
  - b. **List the application's significant strengths and weaknesses and annotate each.** Each significant strength or weakness **must** be supported by **at least one** of the Eligibility or Application Review Criteria that were in the SIF NOFA. (criteria are included in this form)
  - c. **Taking into consideration** both the Narrative Assessment and the listed strengths and weaknesses, **select a category Rating** by checking the appropriate box.
2. **Complete the Overall Appraisal section.** In this section, you will:
  - a. Provide an Overall Appraisal Statement; and
  - b. Select a Consensus Band that represents the quality of the application as a whole. The Bands are described in the Overall Appraisal section at the end of this form.

## **PROGRAM DESIGN (45%)**

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The **Social Innovation Fund Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)** states that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Program Design.

### **A. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

*The Corporation asks applicants to use a thematic approach in describing their proposed investments in community organizations. As established in the Act, there are two basic operational models of SIF intermediaries. The first is a SIF that will operate in a single geographic location, and address one or more priority issues within that location. This model is referred to as a "geographically-based SIF." The second model is a SIF that will address a single priority issue area in multiple geographic locations. This model is referred to as an "issue-based SIF." The Corporation will assess whether the application properly proposes goals and objectives as either a geographically-based or an issue-based SIF.*

#### **i. Geographically-Based SIF**

*The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area(s) within the specific local geographic area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to those issue areas that the applicant will seek to improve.*

#### **ii. Issue-Based SIF**

*The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area within the geographic areas likely to be served, including statistics demonstrating that those geographic areas have a high need in the priority issue area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to the priority issue area that the applicant will seek to improve.*

### **B. USE OF EVIDENCE**

*Applicants must include in their application information describing their track record of using rigorous evidence, data, and evaluation tools to:*

- Select and invest in subgrantees;*
- Support and monitor the replication and expansion of subgrantees; and*
- Achieve measurable outcomes.*

### **D. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES**

#### **i. Subgranting**

*Applicants must describe the process by which they will competitively select their nonprofit community organization subgrantees, and, if applicable, the process by which they have pre-selected some subgrantees. Specifically, applicants must describe how their competitive subgrant selection process will ensure a portfolio of subgrantees that are innovative nonprofit community organizations serving low-income communities and that possess:*

- *A commitment to and track record of using data and evaluation for performance and program improvement;*
- *Evidence of effectiveness, including a demonstrated track record of achieving specific measurable outcomes related to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary;*
- *Strong potential for replication or expansion;*
- *A well-defined plan for achieving specific measurable outcomes connected to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary, evaluation of program effectiveness, performance improvement, and replication or expansion; and*

ii. **Technical Assistance and Support**

- a. *Applicants must include in their application information describing how they will provide technical assistance and support (other than financial support) that will increase the ability of subgrantees to achieve their measurable outcomes, including replication or expansion. Replication or expansion may happen in various ways (including, for example, creating new sites or affiliating with another program to replicate an intervention) and in multiple contexts (including, for example, serving more people in a current geography or growing to new geographies).*

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**Provide a panel assessment of the application's PROGRAM DESIGN as follows:**

- **Write a brief Narrative Assessment;**
- **List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and**
- **Select a Rating for this section.**

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**Panel Narrative Assessment**

The applicant proposes to focus on low-income and rural communities in Kentucky with poor health behavior profiles and demonstrated health needs. Health outcomes of concern include improving access to health care, increasing physical activity, improving nutrition, and reducing smoking rates in underserved areas. They articulately and adequately justify the rationale for investing in this geographically based area. Although a young foundation, the organization has demonstrated a commitment for promoting health and social interventions, and has been funding targeted community grants to implement strategies that address important health challenges. Given the applicant's focus on specific populations with perhaps different pressing social and health needs, it remains unclear as to how the foundation will ensure that sub-grantees can successfully replicate or expand their efforts, as much of this burden falls on the sub-grantees to learn and implement. While the applicant's emphasis and clear plan on providing on-going technical support for data and evaluation and assessment tool training to sub-grantees is notable, the use of systematic methods to rigorously assess impact and progress on measurable health outcomes and to analyze behavior change among targeted project participants, as a distinctly different goal from assessing teachability of sub-grantees (page 18), could be clearer.

**Significant Strengths**

(+) The applicant provides statistics that support the case for focusing on rural communities in Kentucky, including the fact that the state has the highest burden of cancer mortality due in large part to

lung cancer, and higher obesity rates in rural communities in Kentucky than elsewhere in the state.  
(*Program Design, A, i*)

(+) The applicant outlines an important planning and review period by which to provide technical assistance and training. The applicant admirably proposes to reevaluate sub-grantees after this planning period, before investing further. Recognizing that some smaller community based organizations may not understand or be equipped in areas of research design and evaluation, this approach allows the applicant to balance supporting on-the-ground awareness and community ties of potential grantees with the need for training in evaluation rigor on achievable outcomes. This approach has also proved useful in reshaping and assisting some of the foundation's past grantees' strategies. For example, based on on-going evaluation, the applicant realized that a foundation funded Coordinated School Health Initiative needed to develop broader leadership buy-in for their work, which has led to modifications in the grantee's approach and an effort to engage with School Board Association. (*Program Design B, i*)

(+) The above example also demonstrates an awareness by the applicant of the imperative of developing community and stakeholder buy-in as part of their grant-making process. Based on their description of their influence in policy discussions and community coalitions, and their stated recognition of the need for greater communication and dissemination efforts (which they are now implementing), the applicant is on a strong path to becoming an important intermediary for community and policy stakeholders.  
(*Program Design, B, i*)

(+) The applicant will use a structured mixed methods approach to monitor progress of sub-grantees in implementing their objectives (e.g., interviews and on-site visits with grantees, key informant interviews, document reviews, secondary data analyses) to create a more nuanced understanding of baseline capabilities of sub-grantees, and to measure improvements in implementation. This approach highlights an understanding by the applicant organization of how to evaluate and track performance using different analytic tools to generate an accurate picture of progress. (*Program Design, D, i*)

(+) The applicant plans to cast a wide net for identifying competitive sub-grantees -- including using their extensive lists of contacts and stakeholders to assist them in their search—in order to select organizations that show promise and dedication in achieving success in the communities they serve.  
(*Program Design, D, i*)

(+) The applicant shows a commitment to and early experience with assisting sub-grantees in securing funds from other foundations and nonprofits, locally and nationally. These are critical connections and skills for both the short and long-term sustainability of these sub-grantees' efforts. (*Program Design, D, ii*)

### **Significant Weaknesses**

(-) The use of external evaluations and the applicant's own evaluation design, while critical for objective tracking of progress, appears to be more heavily geared towards evaluating process outcomes than towards evaluating achievable and measurable health impact outcomes (e.g., X% reduction in smoking rates; X% of targeted population reporting adequate fruit and vegetable intake). The discussion of assessing cross-cutting indicators to measure accomplishments across grantees is an example of the applicant's reliance on process-oriented outcomes as opposed to sustainable, measurable health outcomes to gauge success (page 8). (*Program Design, B, i*)

(-)The magnitude of effectiveness will vary across sub-grantees, given the applicant's wider focus across health issues, but the specific criteria or manner in which "strong" or "moderate" evidence of program effectiveness will be judged or assessed for the targeted communities is not strongly delineated. A concrete example of how to assess a sub-grantee's effect on long-term outcomes is not clearly made, including what type of evidence, statistical approach, and research design would be used to judge the strength of evidence. (*Program Design, B, i*).

(-) The applicant has seemingly relied heavily on one organization to conduct their evaluation work – the Center for Community and Health Evaluation (CCHE). While a reputable organization, this heavy reliance may narrow the ways in which the organization thinks about and conceptualizes how to effectively judge, monitor, and analyze research design and isolate true program impact on individual or community-level outcomes across their sub-grantees. (*Program Design, B, i*)

(-) It appears that the applicant has already selected a sub-grantee (page 14). While the sub-grantee's activities fit within the purpose of the SIF, a more detailed justification and transparent explanation of the criteria and selection process used to fund this sub-grantee is warranted, in keeping in line with SIF criteria that applicants outline a clear process for selection and competition. (*Program Design, B, i*)

(-) The applicant states they will produce measurable improvements by July 2013. The goal is perhaps overly ambitious, since the applicant admirably emphasizes nurturing and sub-granting organizations that may lack experience in evaluation or using health-related data. The trade-off in selecting grantees with more limited experience is that the training and technical assistance process will be more time intensive, and a longer, more realistic time frame should be developed for these groups, But they will also draw from organizations that have a long track record of health interventions and community relationships. For these non-profits, the 2013 goal might be reasonable. (*Program Design, D, i*)

**Select a Rating for PROGRAM DESIGN** (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

Excellent

Strong

Satisfactory

Weak/Non-responsive

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## **ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (35%)**

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The Social Innovation Fund NOFA states that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Organizational Capacity.

### **A. ABILITY TO PROVIDE PROGRAM OVERSIGHT**

*In evaluating your organization's ability to provide program oversight, the Corporation will consider:*

- i. *The extent to which your organization has a sound structure including:*
  - *The ability to provide sound programmatic oversight, including:*
    - *Experience with and capacity for evaluation; and*

- *Experience with and capacity for supporting replication or expansion.*
  - *A well-designed plan and systems for organizational (as opposed to subgrantee) self-assessment and continuous improvement*
- ii. *Whether your organization has a sound record of accomplishment, including the extent to which you:*
- *Have a track record of supporting organizations that demonstrate evidence of impact;*
- 

**Provide a panel assessment of the application's ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY as follows:**

- **Write a brief Narrative Assessment;**
  - **List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and**
  - **Select a Rating for this section.**
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**Panel Narrative Assessment**

The applicant organization has only been fully operational since 2006, and has a limited track record of supporting organizations that bear evidence of impact. The foundation is also relatively small in size (only FTE), and will need to higher at least one full time staff member to increase their capacity and provide oversight responsibilities. Their small size has also meant that the economic recession impacted their ability to provide new support to grantees in recent years. That said, the foundation has wisely invested in supporting the use of local data tools for health planning and policy, and supported work that emphasized civic engagement and coalition building. The applicant's grantees' work thus far has largely been judged and evaluated according to these latter measures of advocacy and engagement, as opposed to measurable improvements in health behaviors or health outcomes, which take a longer time to achieve. The multi-site initiative areas and grants that the foundation has supported, such as reporting state health facts or school-based health initiatives, are appropriately matched in scale and scope to the foundation's goals, but no evidence of convincing intermediate or long-term impact is presented. They also have contracted with an outside evaluation expert organization to conduct and monitor their own progress. This same outside evaluator will likely be used to evaluate the sub-grantees if a SIF grant is awarded.

**Significant Strengths**

(+) Though small in size and a young organization, the foundation has wisely invested in grantmaking that supports and develops the use of local data tools to make for stronger health planning and policy advocacy. This signifies an eye towards the use of quantifiable data to motivate and monitor grantee priorities. Their impact in grantmaking thus far has largely been witnessed in community and civic engagement among local and state health policy and advocacy organizations, which are appropriate outcomes given the smaller size of the organization (*Organizational Capacity, A, i*)

(+) There is a strong commitment to evaluation at the leadership level, as demonstrated by their use of several approaches and mix of data sources to assess impact of their grantees and to make strategic shifts in their own organization. The executive director also has prior experience with program evaluation. The leadership team has made useful and fruitful connections thus far with local and national organizations to foster their credibility and pool of experts to draw from. (*Organizational Capacity, A, i*)

(+) The applicant has a track record of using evaluation to inform its decision-making and to improve the quality of programs in an iterative way. They have made adjustments to their monitoring strategies based on these types of evaluation findings, including requiring some grantees to focus their work on a more narrow geography to have greater impact, strengthening their communications strategy, and funding technical assistance in areas that were not part of their grantee's geographic base to have greater impact. (*Organizational Capacity, A, ii*)

### Significant Weaknesses

(-) Two of the foundation's past funding initiatives, Local Data for Local Action (LDLA) and Shaping Kentucky's Future, are given as examples of efforts that are making a difference. The LDLA is mentioned frequently, and is likely a good resource for community-based organizations to build coalitions and assess priority needs. That said, past evidence of impact by grantees that is cited by the applicant (e.g., developing a model for in-home care for elderly, advocating for the doubling of the tobacco tax, promoting smoke-free buildings) are not linked to the two major initiatives highlighted. Furthermore, it is not clear how these initiatives have contributed to the achievement of long-term measurable outcomes (i.e., reduced smoking, reduced unmet health care needs). (*Organizational Capacity, A, i*)

(-) Because it is a relatively new foundation, the applicant does not have a track record of overseeing federal grants or supporting sub-grantees that have exhibited evidence of strong or replicable impact. The organization's ability to provide adequate oversight and meet standards of technical quality and independence is not clearly articulated. (*Organizational Capacity, A, ii*)

(-)The applicant organization has a fairly small staff (6 FTE). Although they propose to bring in a new program officer to head this initiative, the responsibilities of oversight placed on this unnamed program officer will be large. This program officer will be in charge of overseeing large SIF grants in 6 to 10 low-income communities, to maintain constant and good relationships with grantees. Because they do not appear to have in-house experts who have evaluative backgrounds, this PO must also be able to analyze and use evaluation methods and reports in a critical manner. While possible for one person to take on these roles, it is a legitimate challenge that is often more suited for a multi-person team based approach. (*Organizational Capacity, A, ii*)

Select a Rating for ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

Excellent       Strong       Satisfactory       Weak/Non-responsive

### COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (20%)

The **Social Innovation Fund NOFA** states that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

#### **A. BUDGET AND PROGRAM DESIGN**

*In evaluating the cost effectiveness and budget adequacy of your proposed program, the Corporation will consider:*

- i. *Whether your program is cost-effective*
- ii. *Whether your budget is adequate to support your program design.*

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**Provide a panel assessment of the application's COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY as follows:**

- **Write a brief Narrative Assessment;**
- **List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and**
- **Select a Rating for this section.**

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#### **Panel Narrative Assessment**

The program budget for the applicant is appropriate to their stated goals. They seek \$1 million from a SIF award, and propose to sub-grant 82% of those funds. All direct funds received will be matched by the organization, drawing from their own endowment, and they also plan to augment with other foundation resources. They have allocated some of the funds to support the position of a new program officer (about \$60K without benefits), and about \$200,000 is allocated to external evaluation. They have also allocated about \$50,000 for technical assistance workshop. Together these are essential to successfully support and engage targeted communities.

#### **Significant Strengths**

- (+) The applicant appropriately designated 10% of program budget funds to support external evaluation. This is a reasonable and good estimate for what it would take to implement the evaluation component described in the proposal.
- (+) The foundation will use SIF funds to hire a new program officer to oversee the SIF grantees. This will be an important staff position, and an essential part of the budget.

#### **Significant Weaknesses**

- (-) The applicant has limited internal resources to provide fiscal oversight. Because they have no experience with managing federal grants, the lack of a grants administrator or fiscal officer who has first-hand knowledge of federal compliance procedures might be problematic, although they plan to hire an external CPA firm to assist them with financial oversight.

Select a Rating for COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

Excellent

Strong

Satisfactory

Weak/Non-responsive

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## OVERALL APPRAISAL

**I. Provide a 3 - 5 sentence Overall Appraisal Statement of the application taking into consideration:**

- The Narrative Assessments, significant strengths and weaknesses, and Ratings from each category; and
- The weighting of each category (Program Design (45%), Organizational Capacity (35%), Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (20%).

The applicant has an informed sense of the health concerns and pressing needs in their target area. They have selected ambitious indicators that could plausibly be improved over the long-run through the work of grantees, such as reducing smoking rates in areas with high tobacco use or improving physical activity and nutrition to lower obesity in high risk areas, but should balance the need for feasibility in their approach, and should also identify realistic and measurable target outcomes for the populations they serve. The organization is both small and young, and they do not have the internal capacity to conduct rigorous evaluation and analyses, but they plan to partner with an outside organization, the Center for Community and Health Evaluation, to assist them in their evaluations of grantees. The applicant's program design and timeline for achieving measurable progress are ambitious, but need to be balanced against its organizational capacity. Some of the timeline goals for producing measurable improvements might not be realistic, considering that some grantees will need extensive training and assistance. While not as strong or articulate in terms of how to scientifically assess impact and program effectiveness among target populations and communities, they have a strong, well-articulated plan to monitor, evaluate, and provide technical assistance to support the planning and implementation work of their grantees, pulling together multiple sources of primary and secondary data. Furthermore, the applicant makes a compelling case that it would make necessary mid-course adjustments using evaluation data, a strength. The application perhaps relies heavily on one evaluator and does not demonstrate a strong in-house ability to judge the rigor of research design and evaluation or provide fiscal oversight (this will be contracted out), but these issues were outweighed by the application's significant strengths and emphasis on community-building and stakeholder buy-in as a means to achieve sustained impact. For this reason, we give this application a Band of "Strong."

**II. Select one Band for this application (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")  
Ensure that your selection is supported by your panel's Narrative Assessments, significant**

Applicant Name: Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky

Application ID#: 10SI116273

**strengths and weaknesses, Ratings, and Overall Appraisal Statement. Take into consideration the weighting of each category.**

- Band I (Excellent):** A comprehensive and thorough application of excellent merit with very significant strengths and no/minimal significant weaknesses.
- Band II (Strong):** An application that demonstrates overall competence and is worthy of support, where the value of the significant strengths outweigh the identified weaknesses.
- Band III (Satisfactory):** An application with potential, where strengths and weaknesses are approximately equal. However, some fundamental weaknesses have been identified.
- Band IV (Weak/Non-Responsive):** An application with very significant weaknesses and no/minimal significant strengths that have been identified. This option may also include an application that is non-responsive to the published criteria.

## CONSENSUS RUBRIC

Please use this Consensus Rubric as guidance when selecting your Ratings or Bands.

**BAND I (Excellent)** — *A BAND I rating reflects that the application is compelling, consistently excellent in quality, and addresses all requirements; thereby showing the highest potential for success.*

The **Excellent** application consistently:

- ✓ Goes beyond what was requested, showing that the applicant has anticipated issues that may arise.
- ✓ Provides a thorough, detailed response to all of the information requested.
- ✓ Provides a clear and highly compelling description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Provides clear evidence to support all objectives of this section (no assumptions are made).
- ✓ Supports ideas and objectives with comprehensive plans explaining and connecting ideas to objectives.

**BAND II (Strong)** — *A BAND II rating reflects that the application is solid, good-quality, and has great potential for success.*

Applicant Name: Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky  
Application ID#: 10SI116273

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The **Strong** application:

- ✓ Provides a response to all of the information requested.
- ✓ Provides a realistic description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Explains most assumptions and reasons.
- ✓ Supports ideas with comprehensive plans, examples, or outlines.

**BAND III (Satisfactory)** — *A BAND III rating reflects that the application generally meets requirements for a reasonable chance of success, but is neither especially strong nor especially weak.*

The **Satisfactory** application:

- ✓ Covers most of the information requested, with a few exceptions.
- ✓ Is sometimes unclear how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Makes some assumptions and leaves some reasons unexplained.
- ✓ Supports individual ideas with plans, examples, or outline.

**BAND IV (Weak/Non-responsive)** — *A weak/non-responsive rating reflects that the application is below standard especially in ability, skill, or quality; indicating that this application will most likely not succeed as described or is not responsive to the application requirements.*

The **Weak/Non-responsive** application:

- ✓ Does not provide one or more key pieces of requested information.
- ✓ Gives an unclear description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Gives many unsupported assumptions and reasons with little or no connection to objectives.
- ✓ Tends to “parrot” back the question, rather than answer and explain it
- ✓ Makes many assumptions and many reasons are not defined.
- ✓ Did not connect the activities to the anticipated results.
- ✓ Does not address or respond to the requirements/conditions of the NOFA.
- ✓ Proposes activities that are not consistent with the NOFA and application instructions.