



2008 Request for Proposals

In 2008, the NYC Venture Philanthropy Fund will make one grant to a New York City non-profit working to improve the environment. The grant will consist of a \$10,000 cash grant as well as technical assistance to the grantee from VPF members.

About NYC Venture Philanthropy Fund

The NYC Venture Philanthropy Fund (VPF) is a giving circle of individuals who combine their professional skills and financial contributions to support local social entrepreneurs in New York City.

Launched in 2008, our mission is to support emerging, innovative leaders who are tackling persistent social and economic problems in New York City.

VPF seeks to create a community where passionate and committed New Yorkers can join together to develop new approaches to change. We hope to help harness the vitality, ingenuity and incomparable resources of New York City for the benefit of all of its residents by raising awareness of critical issues, growing and educating a highly diverse membership about the power of collective giving, and by joining forces with thought leaders, activists and like-minded organizations.

2008 Granting Philosophy

VPF seeks to provide an effective method for identifying emerging under-funded, under-recognized projects or programs that embody an entrepreneurial spirit, and promise results that directly address complex, persistent social problems. VPF is especially interested in supporting startups and fledgling organizations that have not yet received significant support from major funders.

In order to focus on issues in a meaningful way, each year VPF will make a grant in one critical area, such as education, the arts, hunger, poverty, etc. In 2008-2009, VPF members voted to support unique, innovative ideas that seek to address environmental issues in New York City.

New York City is one of the most energy efficient and environmentally conscious cities in the United States. The City's population density, vast urban footprint, mass transit system, and diverse population have resulted in many environmental challenges, including residential and commercial waste, contaminated brownfields, lack of open space, and high energy consumption. In addition, climate change is affecting our communities in significant ways.

Government agencies and non-profit organizations are responding to these issues. The Council

on the Environment of New York City, through its Open Space Greening Program (OSG), is empowering communities to create community gardens and parks. GreenHomeNYC is working to facilitate the adoption of sustainable building methods and materials by owners of small residential and commercial buildings in New York City. On Earth Day 2007, Mayor Bloomberg announced PlaNYC 2030, and kicked off 127 new initiatives to address the environmental sustainability of the City. In the first year of PlaNYC, the City completed re-zonings, planted 54,484 trees, moved taxis toward fuel efficiency, built 60 new miles of bike lanes, and engaged New York in the most significant transportation discussion in a generation.

These moves toward environmental responsibility in the public, private, and non-profit sectors signal that this is an ideal time for New York City's social entrepreneurs to explore and create innovative ideas that promote environmental sustainability and awareness in our neighborhoods and our city.

Grant Awards

VPF is offering a one-year grant for the 2009 calendar year. The grant includes:

- 1) a \$10,000 operational cash grant,
- 2) in-kind technical assistance from VPF members and partners, and
- 3) access to professional networks including but not limited to consulting services, donors and funding, and extended constituencies.

In this, VPF's inaugural year, multi-year grants will not be considered.

2008 Eligibility and Selection Criteria

VPF invites organizations working in New York City on issues related to the environment to submit proposals for funding consideration in 2008-09.

Organizations with annual operating budgets of \$200,000 or less are eligible to apply. Applicants must be recognized or pending¹ as a non-profit organization under section 501c3 of the US tax code. Current VPF members are not eligible to apply for VPF grants.

The strongest applicants will:

- Introduce a highly innovative, well-planned and scaleable model for tackling issues related to the environment;
- Incorporate principles of environmental justice and sustainability;
- Have the potential to demonstrate measurable results;
- Boast a professional leadership team with the appropriate experience and expertise to enable the organization and its programs to succeed; and
- Have a Board with a strong contribution record.

VPF does not fund:

- Unaffiliated individuals
- Publications
- Scholarships, capital projects, or endowments
- Hospitals and medical facilities
- Political parties and/or their related activities
- Governmental organizations and agencies
- Sectarian entities (religious, political or ideological in nature) whose services are limited to a particular sect or who require recipients to adhere to a specific dogma, political point of view or religious practice in order to receive services
- Intermediary funding agencies

Monitoring & Reporting

VPF is committed to collaboration and transparency, and we seek to work with grantees in respectful, strategic partnerships. To clarify shared expectations, VPF's Project Management Committee will work with grantees to articulate goals in the following key areas as part of the formal grant agreement:

¹ If you have not registered as a 501c3, we need to see evidence of actions taken to obtain 501c3, status. Such actions include: formation of a board, codification of bylaws and mission statement, or other such processes.

- Building Capacity – VPF will work with grantees to assess their current organizational capacity, develop strategies to strengthen key areas, and provide technical assistance as appropriate.
- Networking with Community Members – VPF will provide access to professional networks and potential additional sources of funding, and will promote grantee events to its members, colleagues and partners whenever possible. Grantees will occasionally be required to participate in VPF events.
- Mapping and Learning From Results – VPF will work with grantees to develop mission-based performance benchmarks and assessment systems to strengthen organizational effectiveness over time.

2008 Application Timeline

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| 1) Proposals due: | <u>September 26, 2008 @ 5pm</u> |
| 2) Finalists announced | <u>1st or 2nd week of October 2008</u> |
| 3) Grant Awarded | <u>3rd week of November 2008</u> |

After a due diligence process, VPF funding decision will be made in fall 2008. The grant year for NYC Venture Philanthropy Fund grants is January 1, 2009 – December 31, 2009. Payment of the grant award will be made in full upon receipt of a signed grant agreement by January 31, 2009.

Application Procedure

VPF recommends that any organization considering applying for a grant first complete the pre-application questionnaire on our website, www.nycvpf.org, to determine if they are a suitable applicant.

As a next step, applicants should prepare a short application according to the guidelines below. A limited number of applicants will be selected as finalists and asked to “pitch” their idea at a gathering of the entire VPF membership.

Application Guidelines

To be eligible for VPF funding, prospective grantees must submit a cover form (see below), applicant’s statement, and supporting documentation as outlined below.

Applicants’ statements should be no more than 6,000 words and should address the following:

1. A brief description of your organization’s history and its mission.
2. What is the specific environmental problem in New York City that your organization wants to address, and why is it important? How does your organization plan on tackling this problem?
3. What specific new or innovative solutions or mechanisms for change is your organization proposing? What other organizations are doing similar work?

4. Please list all partnerships (within and without your sector) your organization has forged, and describe the nature of those partnerships.
5. What experiences (professional and/or personal) qualify the leaders of your organization to work in this area?
6. How will funding from VPF assist your group in meeting its goals? What kind of technical assistance would be most helpful to your organization at this time?

Supporting documentation necessary for a complete application include:

1. A completed application cover form (see below).
2. A copy of your most recent IRS letter indicating your organization's tax exempt status, or, if not available, an explanation.
3. An application, as described above.
4. A short bio of each member of your leadership team.
5. A list of your Board of Directors, with their affiliations.
6. A list of your other funders.
7. A copy of your most recent financial statement, or a three-year projected annual operating budget, including a listing of all revenue streams (if applicable).
8. Two references (with contact information) who can attest to your organization's work and/or leadership. We reserve the right to contact supplied references.

All requested materials **must be e-mailed** to VPF at grants@nycvpf.org by **SEPTEMBER 26, 2008 at 5pm.**

Inquiries

Questions about 2008 VPF Grants process should be directed to grants@nycvpf.org.

NYC Venture Philanthropy Fund 2008 Grant

Application Coversheet

Organizational Information

Name of Organization:		
Project Name (if applicable):		
Primary Contact Person:		Title:
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Tel:	Fax:	Email:
Name of Executive Director (if not listed above):		Website:
How did you learn about the VPF Grant?		

Proposal Information

Please provide a two sentence description of your request for funding:	
Grant Request (up to \$10,000):	
Total organizational budget (for current fiscal year):	Total organizational budget for 2007 fiscal year:
Dates covered by this budget:	
Is your organization tax-exempt? If so, please list your Federal Tax ID number.	
If no, please list fiscal sponsor with tax-exempt status:	