Center for Transformative Action
APPLICATION FOR NEW PROJECT

Thank you for applying for fiscal sponsorship to the Center for Transformative Action. This step is to be taken after you've had an initial consultation with CTA Executive Director, Anke Wessels, and read through all the application documents and eligibility guidelines. These can be found on our website at: http://centerfortransformativeaction.org/financial-sponsorship.html.

Once you have completed the application, please submit it with all applicable documents to Anke at akw7@cornell.edu. Any questions? Call 607-255-5027.

Deadlines for applications are accepted four times a year on these dates:

> For review beginning in October, please submit your final application by September 15
> For review beginning in February, please submit your application by January 15
> For review beginning in May, please submit your application by April 15
> For review beginning in August, please submit your application by June 15 (the Board of Directors does not meet in July)

In order for us to better understand the work you are proposing and how it fits with CTA's mission, we would like you to submit a written proposal. In the proposal, please include the following information:

1.   Project name

2.   Contact name, address, e-mail and phone number

3.   How do you picture the future of your Project? (You don't have to know the answers to these questions now, and your plans may change, but it is important that we understand your vision at this stage.)

 __ *will your Project be completed at a certain time?*

 __ *will your Project obtain its own 501 (c)3 at some point?*

 __ *will your Project always fall under a fiscal sponsor?*

 __ *Other_____*

4. Summarize your Project's work and purpose in one sentence. (30 words)

Keep it simple and concise! Try to answer who, what, where, and why.

5. Please state your Project's work and purpose in one paragraph. (150 words)

Expand on your answer to the previous question regarding who, what, where, and why. Imagine that a friend who knows little about your work asks you to explain your organization. How would you describe your organization to them? You may also think of this as your "elevator pitch"; if you only had a brief moment to describe your Project to someone during an elevator ride, what would you say to convince that person of your Project's importance or value? Briefly, what value are you creating, for and with whom, and to address what need?

6. Describe the specific social problem your Project is working to solve or the opportunity it is creating. Use statistics and references to identify the size and scope of the problem. (250 words)

Identify the problem that you intend to address or opportunity you are creating and explain why it's significant. If possible, provide information substantiating that the need exists through the use of statistics from experts or constituents. Tell us about the lives of the population your organization will serve. One common mistake made by applicants is stating the need without sufficient statistics, sources, or examples to support the claim.

7. Describe the specific programs or services of your Project, how you will deliver them and to whom. (250 words)

What will your work look like? What will you or your staff do on a daily/weekly/monthly basis? Think about a member of the population served by your Project and tell us how that person will experience your programs. Be specific enough that you are not just repeating the idea behind your organization over again, but actually explaining how your Project will carry out that idea in reality, and who will benefit directly from your work.

8. **We are especially interested in Projects that address the needs of a wide range of historically marginalized and underserved groups. Please describe how you envision doing so.**

We realize that your project probably has particular target audiences with which you plan to work. We also encourage you to think about diverse groups within and beyond these target populations that you could work with to achieve greater and more significant impact.

9. How are those who will benefit from your Project being included in its design and implementation? (350 words)

How are the insights and experiences of those who will benefit from your programs or services central to the design and implementation of these? Tell us how you are including people from the population that will benefit in the planning of your Project, as well as in the development, delivery, and evaluation of your programs and services.

10. How will your programs or services effect change, and how will you know if they are successful? (350 words)

Above, you described the problem(s) your Project helps address. Now tell us how you believe your programs and services will effect a change that will help solve or transform that problem. And, please explain, exactly, how you will evaluate or document that your programs are making a difference. What are your short-term goals? What are your longer-term goals? How will you know whether you are reaching these goals? Please include goals and indicators related to reaching and including diverse populations.

11. How does your work represent innovation versus the status quo? Who else is doing similar work? How does your work complement and improve upon what is already being done in this field? (350 words)

It is very likely that there are a wide variety of organizations and entities, from local community organizations to governmental agencies, which deliver services to the constituency/community that you have identified. How is your idea for social change different from the ideas already at work? Name specific organizations working in your field. Show how your work is similar and complementary to that of others in the field. Then explain how is it distinctly different and an improvement on existing models. It may be useful to create a table using specific categories to compare your Project to the work already being done.

12. How will your Project be a manifestation of Transformative Action? (350 words)

We seek Projects that demonstrate the potential of Transformative Action in achieving systemic and lasting social change. Transformative Action is an alternative paradigm for social action that moves us beyond complaint, competition and "us versus them" thinking. It has three basic components: 1) Breaking the silence that surrounds injustice—giving up the habit of staying quiet and small in the face of injustice; 2) Building understanding across social and ideological difference so that animosity transforms into goodwill and those considered adversaries become allies; 3) Articulating and working toward an inspiring, proactive vision. You can learn more about Transformative Action on our website: www.centerfortransformativeaction.org. How will your programs and approach to social change manifest some or all of the principles of Transformative Action?

13. What resources does your Project have for its startup? Who are your key partners? (300 words)

Provide details about the resources you already have, such as volunteers, board members, staff, donors, grant opportunities, equipment, money in-hand, etc., that will support a successful launch of your Project.

What network of partnerships will make your Project a success? Other than CTA, are there partners who will contribute key activities, resources, or access?

14. Budgets
a. Create realistic first and second-year budgets

While it is likely that you have not yet raised funds, we do expect that you have a funding strategy and have demonstrated potential for strong financial support. To help you communicate this potential, we require that you submit first and second -year budgets. A budget is a planning document and a financial vision of what you wish the Project to achieve. How you envision raising and spending financial resources provides another way to communicate your organization's priorities and values. A two-year budget provides a financial picture of how you will grow or sustain your

Project after the start-up phase. You won't know in advance precisely how much money you'll be able to raise, from whom, and how you'll spend it, but it is important to think through the process and make your best estimate.

Therefore, your budgets should be realistic and show as much detail regarding expense (cost) and revenue (funding) streams as possible. Please use our budget template to provide the information.

For Projects located outside of Tompkins County, we ask that you submit a three-year budget. Please provide solid evidence of $20,000 in identified funding (in-hand, formally committed or promised once 501c3 is available, expected income for services) in your first-year budget.

By the end of the Project's second and third years, we require that it have reached an operating budget of $40,000 and $60,000 respectively. As part of your application, submit second and third-year budgets, illustrating how your Project will obtain these minimum budgets.

For Projects located within Tompkins County, there is no minimum budget requirement. Nonetheless, we ask that you provide realistic first and second-year budgets that detail expense and revenue streams, and, where appropriate, show how your organization will grow after its first-year start-up phase.

b. In addition to the budget figures, please include a brief narrative explaining your cost structure, your expected income streams, and how you expect to be financially sustainable. (200 words)

Explain what costs will remain the same despite the size of your programming (fixed costs), and what costs will vary with program size (variable costs). How will you raise the funds to offset your expenses? Be specific. Saying that you will raise donations and grants gives us very little information. Let us know if you have talked to donors and granting organizations already, and what the likelihood is of their support. If you plan on offering goods or services, tell us how you know people will pay for them.

Is your anticipated revenue stream sustainable over time? What alternative plan do you have if you do not raise the entire amount?

15. What skills or experiences demonstrate your ability to attract money, people and other resources to your Project? (350 words)

Provide us with examples that show you possess skills to attract resources to your Project. Think about your experiences and describe a time when you were able to start something new or when you influenced others to join you in a challenging endeavor.

This answer should reflect the experiences of all principle leaders working on this Project.

16. Why are you, unlike the majority of people, so passionate about this issue that you are willing to take the risky leap of starting a new organization? (350 words)

What is driving you to take on this challenge, and why is this the right moment for you to take this action? Be sure to include any experiences you have working in this field and geographic area, as well as any experience you have with the population you intend to serve. Please be specific about the duration of your experience, and the capacity in which you served. This should not be a reiteration of your resume, but instead should help us understand your passion and commitment to this issue, idea, and/or community.

For Projects being lead by more than one person: This answer should reflect the experiences of all principle leaders working on this Project.

17. Provide one or two examples of your ability to overcome challenges and adversity. (350 words)

Starting a new organization is difficult. Social entrepreneurs often run into many obstacles in the early stage of development. Describe a time in your life when you were faced with challenges that compromised your success, and how you managed the situation. Your answer should help us understand how you deal with difficult situations, and could possibly illuminate a time that you failed.

For Projects being lead by more than one person: Provide at least one example of overcoming adversity for each principle leader working on this Project.

18. Describe your leadership style and the type of work relationships you hope to foster within your Project. (350 words)

Working with others to create social change can be very challenging. Egos can emerge and soon focus turns to ownership of ideas, and being right, rather than addressing the social issue at hand. Where and how have you exercised leadership in your life, and how would you describe your leadership approach? What do you believe to be most important in creating successful work relationships?

For Projects being lead by more than one person: This should be answered by all principle leaders; ideally showing how your styles complement each other.

19. Include a resume and 3 references for each of your Project leaders.

If your Project is accepted, your Project leadership will be working closely with CTA staff. Project employees will become paid CTA employees. For this reason, we would like to have the resumes and references of all principle leaders on file.

20. Attach a list of your Advisory Board members. Advisory Board members should be active partners, not impressive names on paper. Please state the nature of their commitment, and expertise, in helping this project succeed.

We require that every CTA Project maintain an Advisory Board with a minimum of five persons. We encourage you to invite people who bring diverse perspectives, especially those from groups who have been historically marginalized and who have had lived experience with the problem(s) your Project is addressing. While an Advisory Board does not carry any legal responsibility (which is borne by the CTA Board of Directors), it is expected to function very much like a non-profit Board of Directors. For the success of your Project, and CTAs administration, it is imperative that you choose individuals who will be active partners, working with you on strategic planning, annual budgets, the selection and supervision of staff, and adherence to all CTA policies.

The human side of an organized effort can be a significant factor in its success or failure. We encourage your Project to form relationships with people who will be able to contribute in tangible ways to the success of the Project.