

# PCEF Grant Process and Criteria Review Subcommittee Minutes

DATE: 2.5.20 FROM 1:00 TO 2:00 PM

## **Attendance:**

Committee Members: Robin Wang, Ranfis Villatoro

Staff: Cady Lister, Janet Hammer

## **Logistics:**

- Next meeting Feb 12<sup>th</sup> Wednesday, 1:00 to 2:00pm

## **Next steps:**

- Staff will draft standard set of questions to ask funders and distribute to subcommittee by 2.7.20 with intent to start calling known funders (private and public) week of 2.10.20.

## **Discussion summary:**

*Review of outside resources:* Discussion of method for conducting due diligence regarding review of other funder methodologies and strategies. Staff will start by: 1) confirming with subcommittee list of questions to ask funders, 2) contact funders who are known or who we have already had conversations, 3) tweak list of questions as needed based on initial conversations, 4) coordinate calls/meetings with funders so that one staff and one subcommittee can participate if possible. Robin offered that he has some relationship with folks at different foundations and could make contacts, also that green banking institutions could offer some learning. If after these conversations there is a need for a broader survey that may be considered.

The goal is to talk to funders that represent both private and government grantmakers, including entities that give small and large grants, and entities that make grants in each of the sectors PCEF will fund: clean energy, workforce development and training, regenerative agriculture, green infrastructure, and innovation, as well as those that have a strong social equity component.

Draft list of questions/info to gather from funders (note to gather what is readily available online prior to conversation rather than ask funder to provide.)

- Mission
- Type of funding they provide: capital, general operating, program/project, technical assistance, capacity building, other.
- Grant size: do they have a min/max, thresholds for different application processes? If so, rationale and how it's working?
- Grantmaking review and decision process: description of process (e.g., LOI, invitation, open; who reviews; who decides; due diligence), how process was established, pros/cons, if/how it process is evaluated, lessons or suggestions?
- Use of scoring frameworks? Triple bottom line considerations?

- Avg. duration for review of applications (hours per application from submission to recommendation)
- # of solicitations/yr, rationale, lessons/suggestions
- # applications received (avg/yr)
- # applications funded (avg/yr)
- \$ awarded (total and avg/yr)
- Estimated avg. duration for APPLICANT to complete: do they try to get at this info in any way, what have they learned, steps to reduce burden (e.g., word or page limits).
- Stakeholder feedback
- Link to application (or request copy if not available online)
- Equity considerations
- Participatory grantmaking approaches if applicable

Preliminary list of funders to contact:

#### Non-government organization

- MRG Foundations <https://www.mrgfoundation.org/>
- Meyer Memorial Trust <https://mmt.org/>
- Social Justice Fund Northwest <https://socialjusticefund.org/>
- Collins Foundation <https://www.collinsfoundation.org/>
- Worksystems Inc <https://www.worksystems.org/>
- Clean Energy Works (past and current iteration)
- Climateworks <https://www.climateworks.org/>
- Oregon Community Foundation?

#### Governmental entities

- City of Portland
- Community Opportunity Enhancement Plan
- Multnomah County
- Port of Portland
- Energy Trust
- Metro

*Discussion of Screening Criteria:* screening should be easy to assess, non-subjective application attributes, not part of the scoring or deeper review. Below is a list of potential screening criteria which will be added to and then each evaluated to be sure it is not unnecessarily burdensome and is needed and/or adds value.

#### Potential list to evaluate

- 1) Eligible non-profit
- 2) Projects located in Portland (e.g., capital projects within city; though workers may draw from Metro area if they are working on projects in Portland).
- 3) Commitment to obtain needed insurance/bonding
- 4) Application is complete

- 5) Floors and ceiling parameters
- 6) Other?

Documentation requirements should be considered for each of these. Conversation about Form 990 as part of list of requirements, waived if less than one year old. 990s have a lot of financial and governance information from past fiscal year that is in consistent format, reducing burden on applicant and staff. Flip side, it is backwards looking so would probably still need updated info. Some discussion about risk associated with funding a non-profit that has not been in existence for very long. Also discussion of different requirements for different levels of funding and/or types of projects. Need to be diligent but not overwhelming. Perceived risk would be assessed at a different stage of review than eligibility screening or potentially even after scoring.

Note to also be thinking about how to screen contractors (e.g. certification, licensing, history of compliance, bonding, etc.).

Evaluation criteria discussion: There was very little time to talk about the criteria that might be scored as part of the application review and evaluation. This conversation will be revisited in future meetings.

Staff noted: 1) There are likely to be different criteria for different types of project, probably six different sets (per "buckets") with as much overlap as possible. 2) Some applications will fit within multiple types "funding buckets". 3) There are some criteria on the example set of criteria that was provided that may need to be unbundled. 4) We are just focusing on the scoring part of the review process, there is often, and likely will be another step or two in which we consider things like portfolio balance, geographic distribution, etc.