

SPIRIT LEVEL FOUNDATION
GRANT GUIDELINES for UU THE VOTE PROJECTS

Approved 7 February 2020 by the Board of Directors of the Spirit Level Foundation

A UUA initiative called **UU the Vote** encourages all UU congregations to:

1. inform their members about the important issues in this year's elections,
2. encourage their members to participate in elections as individuals and as members of their congregations, and
3. educate their members on how such participation, by both congregations and individuals, can be done effectively and legally.

Materials describing UU the Vote are available online from the UUA at <https://www.uua.org/justice/vote2020>. The UUA intends to provide grants to help support UU the Vote activities; see <https://www.uufunding.org/get-out-the-vote.html>.

The Spirit Level Foundation (SLF) would like to provide additional support for UU the Vote. The SLF invites UU congregations that are members of the Unitarian Universalist Association and that are located in San Diego, Orange, Riverside, Ventura, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino Counties to apply for special SLF grants to support involvement in UU the Vote. This document presents guidelines for SLF UU the Vote grants, and takes precedence over the standard guidelines for SLF grants. Applications for special SLF UU the Vote grants do not require the completion of any forms; all that is required is a narrative application that includes the information specified in item 4 below.

1. Examples of expenditures for which applicant congregations can apply to SLF for a UU the Vote grant.
 - a. Hiring a part-time and temporary facilitator or trainer for a UU the Vote project. This facilitator and/or trainer may be a current congregation employee or an outside contractor. The facilitator or trainer should have relevant electoral and training knowledge and experience, including knowledge of legal limitations for congregations participating in elections.
 - b. Cost of materials, if any.
 - c. Partial reimbursement for travel expenses and lost wages for congregation members when the application proposes that trained members of the congregation travel to another state to conduct electoral activities. Maximum reimbursement for individuals is \$500/person.
 - d. Other electoral activities. UU the Vote literature, available from the UUA, provides many examples of other electoral activities in which congregations may engage. The Spirit Level Foundation seeks to fund as many kinds of such activities as possible, but may determine not to fund certain activities. See paragraph 5 below to contact SLF about questions concerning such eligible activities.
2. Ineligible expenditures.
 - a. Expenditures for any activity which is intended to favor a particular candidate or political party, or is otherwise legally improper for a 501(c)3 organization.

- b. Expenditures providing payment to individuals for any electoral activity except training and travel as described above.
3. Conditions on grants.
 - a. SLF will provide up to 75% of funds for the project.
 - b. SLF will provide \$3 for every qualifying dollar raised by the congregation, up to the grant amount.
 - c. Funds raised by the congregation to qualify for matching funds must be in cash. Pledges, loans, donated labor, and materials will not qualify for matching funds.
 - d. Qualifying funds may be provided from general congregation funds.
 - e. Grants must be authorized by the applicant's board of trustees.
 - f. The minimum grant is \$2,000. The maximum grant is \$15,000.
 - g. If SLF approves a grant application, SLF will fund the grant when a lead minister or congregation president submits a certification that the appropriate amount of qualifying funds has been raised or allocated.
4. Features of the application. Applications must include:
 - a. The grant amount requested.
 - b. A budget for the congregation's UU the Vote project.
 - c. A timeline for the project.
 - d. A description of proposed activities. Activities must include:
 - i. informing the entire congregation about UU the Vote,
 - ii. training participants, and
 - iii. writing a (maximum 2-page) Summation/Evaluation of the project which the congregation will send to SLF no later than December 15, 2020.
 - e. A short description of training for those activities, including information about legal limitations on 501(c)3 organizations.
 - f. An estimate of the number of trained participants who will be involved in each activity.
 - g. Estimated costs for travel expenses for members of congregations when their project includes trained congregation members conducting electoral activities in a state other than their home state. The required Summation/Evaluation of the project must include the names of the individuals who engaged in such travel.
5. Applications must total no more than five pages. Please contact Colleen Garrett, Administrator of SLF, at 619-855-3046 or at admin@spiritlevel.org to submit an application or to ask questions about a possible application.
6. Multi-congregation grants. Congregations may partner on a grant, but one congregation must be designated the lead congregation and be responsible for the application, certification of matching funds, handling of funds, and Summation/Evaluation.
7. Timeline:
 - i. Applications may be submitted at any time before July 1, 2020 or until funds for this project are depleted, whichever comes first.
 - ii. Applications will be approved or denied within one month of submission.
 - iii. SLF will fund grants within 5 days of receiving certification of matching funds (see 3g above).

OTHER MATTERS.

The Spirit Level Foundation encourages congregations to partner with existing community groups with a presence in the regions in which the congregation hopes to participate in electoral activity. Established community organizations understand their constituents' electoral concerns and issues far better than outsiders, and are in the best position to communicate with those constituents. The Spirit Level Foundation strongly encourages congregations to respect and defer to the knowledge, understanding, and capabilities of their community partners.

Please review UU the Vote materials on partnering with community organizations found at <https://www.uua.org/justice/vote2020/congregational-organizing>.

END

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