



Spirit Level Foundation

Supporting the Growth of UU Communities in Southern California

Special Category Grant

UU the Vote Application Guidelines 2024

UU the Vote is a nonpartisan civic engagement initiative focused on strengthening democracy and organizing for justice, accountability, and healing. More information about UU the Vote is available on the UUA website at: <https://uuthevote.org/>

UU the Vote projects are opportunities for Congregations to reach out to their surrounding community and to bring together people who share values around participatory democracy and civic engagement. The Spirit Level Foundation (SLF) supports UU the Vote activities expressly to promote greater community engagement and outreach around our core UU values.

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 a special category UU the Vote grant to support their involvement in UU the Vote initiative. This document presents guidelines for SLF UU the Vote grants and is separate from the standard guidelines for SLF grants. These guidelines are in place to help congregations develop and complete grant applications that meet the conditions and requirements for an awarded grant.

Conditions for a special category UU the Vote grant:

- a. A completed application and project budget outlining funding sources and a budget that shows how funds will be used is required. The application can be downloaded from the Spirit Level Foundation website (www.spiritlevel.org) *For questions or assistance with completing the application please contact the SLF Administrator, Colleen Garrett, at admin@spiritlevel.org or call (619) 865-3046
- b. Fundraising can occur before and/or after the grant application is submitted. Funds raised by the congregation must be cash in hand to receive the matching SLF grant. *Pledges, loans, donated labor, and materials will not qualify for matching funds.
- c. SLF will provide **up to 75% of funds** for the project. That is, SLF will potentially provide \$3 for every qualifying dollar raised by the congregation, up to the grant amount.
- d. If SLF approves a grant application, SLF will fund the grant when a lead minister or congregation president submits a certification that the qualifying funds have been raised and are available to fund the UU the Vote project.
- e. Multi-congregation grants. Congregations may partner on a grant, but one congregation must be designated as the lead congregation and be responsible for the application, certification of matching funds, handling of funds, and Summation/Evaluation.
- f. Timeline:
 - Applications may be submitted at any time **from March 1st, 2024 until October 1st, 2024** or until funds for this project are depleted, whichever comes first.
 - Applications will be approved or denied within one month of submission.
 - SLF will fund grants after receiving the certification of matching funds
 - **A Summary Evaluation of the project will be submitted to SLF No later than 1 month after completion of the project.** Please include successes, barriers to success, failed efforts, and a final budget expenditure report.



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Project Budget Conditions:

1. As UU the Vote activities engage congregations to volunteer it is anticipated that congregation members volunteer their time to carry out UU the Vote activities. It is anticipated that the primary costs associated with get-out-the-vote activities will be for postage, printing, and envelopes. Examples of potential expenditures include:
 - a. Cost of materials (e.g., postage, printing, envelopes)
 - b. Other electoral activities. UU the Vote literature, available from the UUA, provides many examples of other electoral activities in which congregations may engage. For questions related other allowable activities please contact Colleen Garrett, Administrator of SLF, at 619-855-3046 or at admin@spiritlevel.org
2. **Examples of ineligible expenditures (please note that b. is different from prior years):**
 - 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 or to manage the coordination of UU the Vote efforts.

Other Considerations.

The Spirit Level Foundation encourages congregations to partner with existing community or online groups with a presence in the regions in which the congregation hopes to participate in the 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.

There are a number of non-partisan organizations (e.g., Vote Forward) that congregations can work through for letter-writing. **It is important to confirm that the get-out-the-vote organization you are planning to work through is non-partisan.** Please review UU the Vote materials on partnering with community organizations found at <https://uuthevote.org/trainings-resources/>