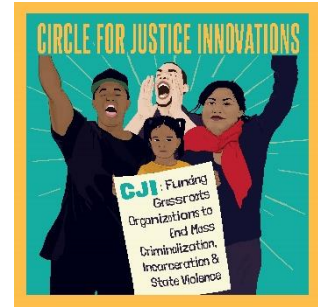


CIRCLE FOR JUSTICE INNOVATIONS

Free Her Request for Proposals and 2019 Grant Application Information



The CJI FreeHer Fund is requesting proposals from eligible grassroots organizations led by women and girls working to end mass criminalization and incarceration of women and girls. CJI's FreeHer Funding Circle is a partnership with **The National Council of Currently and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls**. The **FreeHer Fund** will support grassroots organizing that is based in awareness of the current political environment's hostility toward the rights of women and girls; is led by women and girls directly impacted by the criminal legal system; and is working to restore or expand the rights of currently and/or formerly incarcerated women and girls.

BACKGROUND

The Circle for Justice Innovations (CJI), which began in 2000, was born out of a growing concern with prison expansion, mass incarceration, and the impact of racial disparities on oppressed and marginalized communities. The CJI Leadership Circle is an innovative grant-making panel comprised of donors, donor-activists, and community organizers, most of whom have experienced incarceration. We share power and a passion for supporting meaningful, transformative and systemic change of the criminal legal system. Understanding the limited funding available for progressive criminal justice organizing at the time, this Circle was launched as a means to create a new source of support for this critical work. CJI's mission is to end mass criminalization and mass incarceration in the United States.

Each year, we raise the grant-making funds, convene the Leadership Circle for political education, and determine our grant-making focus. The Leadership Circle then agrees on the RFP focus. We reconvene to evaluate proposals and make grant decisions. Given this process, there is currently no recurring annual deadline or guarantee of multi-year funding for CJI applicants. However, there is also no maximum number of grants an organization can receive from CJI.

The CJI FreeHer application is online and **does not require an invitation to apply**.

CJI's 2019 MOVEMENT PERSPECTIVE

The present moment in history places our movement at a critical juncture. Activists and commentators alike have introduced a wealth of policy proposals. Some would be effective, others ineffective, still others insidious and harmful. CJI believes that currently and formerly incarcerated movement leaders, their organizations and communities working at the grassroots and drawing from experience, must be at the forefront of determining the policies that will move us forward. The movement must also push back against the emergence of tools of repression, however disguised.

CJI supports work that embraces the following tenets:

- Pretrial detention should not be determined by money or racist risk assessments.

- Profit-driven e-carceration tactics that extend punishment in the name of reform are not the answer.
- Moving people from prisons to jails where they will bear the burdens of fewer programs or opportunities to see their loved ones is not the answer.
- Supporting the release of incarcerated people who should not have been imprisoned in the first place, as well as comprehensive work that prevents future incarceration on the same grounds
- New sentencing legislation that purports to be reform must be retroactive in its application.
- Release from incarceration must include assistance with housing, employment, and the services that allow for full integration of full human beings.
- Movement activism and energy should promote restorative justice/restorative practices, alternatives to incarceration, de-carceration and an end to mass criminalization and state violence.

CJI defines **movement building** as: An ongoing collaboration, both within and across communities, intended to eradicate core systems of injustice. Collaborations may include those among grassroots or community organizations and/or between grassroots/community organizations, and people or groups working with transparency and integrity inside the institutions they seek to transform.

CJI ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

CJI will ONLY fund the following:

- Organizations with a demonstrated commitment to the leadership of currently and formerly incarcerated women and girls (incarcerated is defined as confinement in prison, jail, immigrant, juvenile or military detention, or a deportation facility).
- Organizations committed to achieving systems change through organizing, including changes in policies or institutions, such as parole, probation or other systems of control.
- Organizations with budgets of \$750,000 or less. If you are under the umbrella of a larger organization, please define your relationship with that organization.
- CJI will ONLY consider previous grantees that have provided a CJI Progress Report with information about their most-recent CJI-funded work.
- CJI does not fund direct assistance programs. However, CJI may fund organizations that, as part of a larger organizing strategy and/or leadership development plan, help provide basic necessities to communities in desperate need, i.e. diapers to single parents in or near poverty; shelter to trans community members who suffer housing insecurity, food to communities living in poverty.
- **Organizations MUST meet the application deadline with all their required attachments.** To accommodate an increased number of proposals due to an open application process, CJI will hold applicants strictly to the application deadline.

CJI FUNDING PREFERENCES

- Groups that operate in difficult political environments' e.g. in the presence of hostile political campaigns, antagonistic public figures, or repressive laws.
- Groups that develop new leaders, especially black and brown people and those who are marginalized within their own community; e.g poor, homeless or young people; elders, queer or trans people; people with a different racial, religious, or ethnic heritage; people with mental illness or disabilities. Leadership development may include healing and/or personal transformation work; especially in communities that have endured generations of violence and trauma, and who may be currently enduring state violence.
- Work in underfunded communities; especially in the South, Midwest, or Indigenous, undocumented or immigrant communities.

- Organizations with a consensus or near consensus-inclusive decision making process for their constituents/members/communities.

FREE-HER FUNDING PRIORITIES (not restricted to the following)

- **Restoration of Rights:** work that addresses discrimination or abuse against women and girls who have been incarcerated or detained, including the innumerable collateral consequences of incarceration including discrimination in housing, employment, education, voting & parental rights
 - **Conditions of Confinement**
 - Addressing the physical and mental health of women and girls in prison, jail and detention; including counseling, vaccinations, medical testing, medication and hormones, etc.
 - Ending rape, physical and sexual abuse, segregated/solitary housing of women and girls in prison and detention
 - Work that guarantees basic human rights and treatment to women and girls; including provision of basic sanitary and hygienic supplies to women and girls in confinement
 - Work that guarantees placement within proximity to family members
 - **Re-entry**
 - Groups that develop new leaders, especially from women and girls who are marginalized within the prison or jail environment,
 - **Probation & Parole Reform**
 - Transformative changes and decreases in systems of supervision for people released from prison or jail
 - **Reunification**
 - Restoration of mothers' and young mothers' parental rights
- **Sentencing Reform, Bail Reform & Community Based Alternatives to Incarceration**
 - **Legislation that ends extreme sentences and/or provides relief for harsh sentences**
 - Increasing clemency opportunities for women
 - Ending Life Without Parole (LWOP) sentences
 - Policies that decriminalize drug use and provide alternative sentences and treatment for women and children
 - **Reforming “Felony Conspiracy” laws** and their disparate impact on women
 - **Care Giver**
 - Legislation that ends incarceration for caregivers of minors, elders and the differently abled except in cases of a clear threat to safety
 - **Ending Cash Bail**
 - Campaigns connected to movement building
- **Economic Justice**
 - **Free Energy for Free Women, Reimagining Communities**
 - Wind and hydroponic energy
 - **Economic Autonomy**
 - Entrepreneurship, Street Economies & Home Industries and Cooperatives
 - Employment training opportunities for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and girls
- **Reproductive Justice**
 - Ending the criminalization of reproductive rights, coerced or forced sterilization, conditional, coerced or forced use of birth control
 - Providing birth control and reproductive education to women and girls in confinement

FREE-HER PROCESS AND TIMELINE

The **deadline** for the FreeHer application is **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2019, Human Rights Day, by 11:59 PST**. Grant decisions will be made by the FreeHer Circle, which convenes in late **MARCH** of **2019**. Grant decisions will be made by the end of March, with grants awarded soon thereafter.

All applications are read and reviewed by a FreeHer Pre-screen Team, comprised of one staff/directly impacted woman, and one donor. Applications fitting the criteria are then passed on to the members of the FreeHer Circle for review.

1. Maximum grant request amount is \$25,000.
2. Applicants must first fill out an **ELIGIBILITY QUIZ**. The Eligibility Quiz can be found [here](#). The eligibility quiz expires on December 9. If you are invited to apply, this is meant to allow you one day to complete your application.
3. Eligible organizations will be sent a link to **the full application on Submittable**. If there are technical questions about the application process, please contact support@submittable.com.
4. Applicants who would like assistance with proposal review and editing, **AFTER** you have already written a proposal draft, please contact Raquel Marion Virgo at raquel@wocgranted.com. Please schedule your appointment between October 22 and November 15 here: <https://calendly.com/raquel-fundraisinghelp>. If Raquel Marion Virgo's calendar is fully booked, please schedule an appointment with Keesha Gibson between October 21 and December 6 here: <https://calendly.com/keeshag/freeherreview>
Note: Raquel and Keesha will only work with you once you have completed a draft of your proposal.
5. We encourage applicants to write their proposal first in Microsoft Word or Google Docs and when finished, cut and paste the final proposal into Submittable. **If you prefer to work directly on the Submittable platform, make sure to regularly press save and continue so your unfinished application is saved.**
6. If you are invited to apply, please make sure all required fields (indicated with a red asterisk*) are filled when you are ready to submit your application. If nothing happens when you click submit, review each question to ensure all required fields are filled.
7. If you have questions about your organization's eligibility, or the meaning of a question on the application, you are encouraged to reach out to Program Director, Tina Reynolds, at tinar@cjifund.org **BEFORE** the deadline.

Applications must attach the required documents such as budgets, tax-exempt letter, organization demographics chart, etc. to be considered.