



## Strategic Opportunities Support (SOS) Rapid Response Fund 2022 Application Guidelines

The Strategic Opportunities Support Rapid Response Fund (SOS Fund) is a funding mechanism that issues micro-grants (up to \$5,000) to eligible organizations addressing immediate, emergency needs and critically urgent strategic organizing opportunities in their communities. Qualifying organizations are led by and serve formerly incarcerated people and the families of those directly impacted and possess organizational budgets under \$750,000.

Please note that applications for the SOS Fund are accepted on a rolling basis. However, the SOS Fund may close prior to its official deadline in the event that funds for the year have been exhausted. Also, receiving a grant from the SOS fund does not disqualify you from applying for support from other CJI funds.



In the two years since the COVID-19 pandemic began in full force, and it is clearer than ever that we need to foster and share community power to help one other make it over these troubled waters. Who sits in the White House has changed, but the challenges facing our movement persist. The struggle against **voter suppression** continues, the **calls for justice** voiced in the wake of George Floyd's murder by police have largely gone unheeded, and too many people sitting behind bars are effectively being **sentenced to death by COVID** due to the lack of humane health and safety policies.

We carry forward the lessons we learned in 2021 as we gather strength and prepare ourselves for the work still to come. The Circle for Justice Innovations stands alongside our community and is ready to lend our support however we can. With a Circle comprised of progressive-minded donors and systems-impacted activists, we are ready to help you make the change you need to see in the world. Read on for more information about the different areas of work that the SOS Fund supports.

The Strategic Opportunities Support (SOS) Rapid Response Fund supports:

- Responses to cases of state violence (police brutality or violence from other agents of law enforcement, ICE raids, etc.)
- Creation of community-based initiatives for alternatives to policing and incarceration
- Organizing against incidents of white supremacist/fascist aggression
- Work to halt policies that expand the criminalization and/or incarceration of marginalized groups, as well as those that aim to limit constitutionally protected activities
- Work to promote policies that protect, restore or expand protections for and rights of formerly incarcerated peoples, especially voting rights
- Responses to disasters that impact an organization's ability to carry out their criminal justice work and/or that pose a direct threat to incarcerated people
- Advocacy and organizing for an appropriate and just response to COVID-19 such as compassionate release (funding is not offered for PPE supplies)
- Inclusion and/or participation of underrepresented communities or formerly incarcerated people and directly impacted families in movement and policy convenings
- Healing justice work

We **do not fund** projects of the kind listed below:

- Annual fundraising drives, galas, or other development activities
- Projects undertaken by individuals
- Capital costs, including real estate purchases or renovations
- Organizations operating in isolation and not working in community with others
- Healing work that is not connected to organizing or the movement
- Direct services, such as housing, provision of clothes, shelter, food, etc., or standalone legal services divorced from movement work



Our simple application requires a few brief answers regarding the circumstances of the need, verification of 501(c)(3) nonprofit status or fiscal sponsorship, and your project and organizational budgets. If you are a current CJI grantee, only a project budget and narrative are required.

Compelling applications will:

- Demonstrate movement-building or collaborative organizing;
- Show strategic analysis of the emergency or opportunity;
- Thoughtfully explain the purpose of the grant request; and
- Clearly articulate how grant funding will be used.

NOTE: If you experience any technical difficulties, please contact [support@submittable.com](mailto:support@submittable.com). You may also contact a CJI staff person by email at [zacharyh@cjifund.org](mailto:zacharyh@cjifund.org) or by phone at 646-849-9172.