



**Women's Impact Fund  
2013-2014  
January 16, 2014**

**Master Schedule  
Information Guide for  
RFP Review & Site Visits**



## **Grants Committee Meeting – Reading the Grant Application and Site Visits**

**Thursday, January 16, 2014**

**Myers Park United Methodist Church ~ Room 107-108, 4-6 pm**

1. Welcome and Introductions  
Kathy Mansfield - Chair, Women's Impact Fund Grants Committee  
Jeanette Sims - Board Chair, Women's Impact Fund
2. Site Visit Dos & Don'ts-  
Kathy Ridge, Owner, Levridge Resources
3. Breakout sessions
  - a. How to Read a Grant Proposal and Prepare for a Site Visit -  
Mary Gallivan, Director, Center for Corporate Philanthropy, Foundation For The Carolinas
  - b. What Would Barbara Ask: Looking at Grant Proposals from the Evaluator's Perspective –  
Barbara Rein, Program Evaluator, Smart Start of Mecklenburg County
  - c. What You Can Learn from Nonprofit Financials –  
Amy Owen, Owner, Coniston Group  
Arrington Mixon, Program Officer, The Leon Levine Foundation
  - d. Ballot Preparation (*for ballot writers only*) –  
Katie James, Lead Editor
4. Work Team Breakout Meetings - 30 minutes

### **Next Steps and Dates to Remember in the Grants Process**

Jan. 16	Receive and review RFPs
Jan. 16- Feb 14	Site Visits
Feb. 26	Deadline for work teams to select top 3 agencies and submit Ballot Summaries to Lead Ballot Editor
March 10	Final review of Ballots. Distribution to team members for Full Grants meeting on the 13 <sup>th</sup> .
March 13	Full Grants Committee meeting to pick top 10 (5-9 p.m., Myers Park UMC)
April 14	Ballots emailed to WIF members
April 29	Ballots due from WIF members
Week of May 12	WIF Annual Meeting

## **Work Team Job Responsibilities for Site Visits and Ballots**

### **Arts and Culture Services Work Team Roles 2013-14**

Community Impact Liaison – Lisa Miller  
Research Editor – Vida Harvey  
Ballot Writer -Gina Lawrence  
Site Visit Leaders -  
Financial Advisor – Martha Harbison  
Note Takers for Site Visits: Kathy Barton, Sandy Gordon, Betsy Alexander  
Work Team Presenter- LuAnn Ritsema

### **Education Services Work Team Roles 2013-14**

Community Impact Liaison – Barbara Pooley  
Research Editor – Ann Temple  
Ballot Writer - Deb Turner and Ann Allen  
Site Visit Leaders - Ann Allen (Raising a Reader), Julie Sheffer (International House), Karen Brown (Big Brothers Big Sisters) and Debbie Turner (BELL)  
Financial Advisor – Anne Marie Schmitz  
Note Taker for Site Visits – Catherine Collins (International House), Anne Marie Schmitz, Barbara Pooley and Lisa Crotty.  
Work Team Presenter –Lisa Crotty

### **Environment Services Work Team Roles 2013-14**

Community Impact Liaison – Karen Knoble/Marsha Gaspari  
Research Editor – Marylyn Williams  
Ballot Writer - Kathy Sparrow, Allison Flexor, Elaine Scott, Jane Glenn  
Site Visit Leaders - Toccoa Switzer, Linda Martin, Marsha Gaspari, Elaine Scott  
Financial Advisor – Toccoa Switzer  
Note Taker for Site Visits –Mary Powers, Linda Martin, Allison Flexor, Carol Spain  
Work Team Presenter –Mary Powers

### **Health Services Work Team Roles 2013-14**

Community Impact Liaison: Suzy Hubbell  
Research Editor: Rosalie Herring  
RFP Financial Review Advisor: Linda Stanley  
Site Visit Leaders -  
Note Taker for Site Visits: Ruth Ellen Gill, Carla Willis  
Work Team Ballot Writer: Pearlynn Houck  
Work Team Presenter: TBD

### **Human Services Work Team Roles 2013-14**

Community Impact Liaison – Veronica Kenny-Macpherson  
Research Editor – Judy Allison  
Ballot Writer - Cindy McMillin  
Site Visit Leaders -  
Financial Advisor - Mary Sherrill Ware  
Note Taker for Site Visits – Kimberly Lawrence, Val Mittl  
Work Team Presenter – TBD (original volunteer dropped out of work team)

## **Finance Committee Liaisons**

Finance Committee members will be performing a high level review of the financials, based on a worksheet of questions (attached) written by Arrington and Amy. **Each work team is still responsible for a full, detailed review of their own financials.** This step has been added to ensure a more in-depth look at the financials than work teams may be able to provide.

### **Finance Committee Liaisons will:**

1. **Review**, at a higher lever, the financials from each of the submitting organizations. I will be sending the RFP to the Financial Liaisons as they come in (so they will be getting the RFP before your team does) so they can begin their review and notify you of any questions/issues before your site visits.
2. **Communicate** with your team's Financial Advisor and let them know of any concerns/issues and offer a list of questions that should be asked at the site visit.
3. **Work** with your work team Financial Advisor (and you) and answer any questions that you may have.

Grants Chair: Kathy Mansfield [heron39@me.com](mailto:heron39@me.com)

Incoming Chair: Deborah Majewski [deborah.l.majewski@bankofamerica.com](mailto:deborah.l.majewski@bankofamerica.com)

Finance Committee Chair : Amy Owen [amy@conistongroup.com](mailto:amy@conistongroup.com)

Financial Advisor: Arrington Mixon [amixon@llmanagementinc](mailto:amixon@llmanagementinc)

### **Financial Liaison Assignments:**

#### **Arts and Culture**

Team leaders : Vida Harvey [VHarvey@rbh.com](mailto:VHarvey@rbh.com) and LuAnn Ritsema [lurits@aol.com](mailto:lurits@aol.com)

Financial Advisor - Martha Harbison [mharbison@carolina.rr.com](mailto:mharbison@carolina.rr.com)

Debbie Proffitt [dproff8112@aol.com](mailto:dproff8112@aol.com)

#### **Education**

Ann Temple [aefemple@gmail.com](mailto:aefemple@gmail.com) and Pamela Harris-Young [capeshore1@comcast.net](mailto:capeshore1@comcast.net)

Financial Advisor - Anne Marie Schmitz [amschmitz68@gmail.com](mailto:amschmitz68@gmail.com)

Ellen Rankin [ellen.rankin@ubs.com](mailto:ellen.rankin@ubs.com)

Karen Keatley [karen@karenkeatley.com](mailto:karen@karenkeatley.com)

#### **Environment**

Kathy Sparrow [kathyntb@bellsouth.net](mailto:kathyntb@bellsouth.net) and Mary Powers [yoga@marypowers.com](mailto:yoga@marypowers.com)

Financial Advisor - Toccoa Switzer [tswitzer@me.com](mailto:tswitzer@me.com)

Shirell Burris [Shirell.Burris@duke-energy.com](mailto:Shirell.Burris@duke-energy.com)

#### **Health**

Carol Ewald Bowen [carolbowen@mvalaw.com](mailto:carolbowen@mvalaw.com) and Tricia

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Financial Advisor - NA

Amy Owen [amy@conistongroup.com](mailto:amy@conistongroup.com)

Arrington Mixon [amixon@llmanagementinc](mailto:amixon@llmanagementinc)

#### **Humans Services**

Veronica Kenny Macpherson [vkmacpherson@yahoo.com](mailto:vkmacpherson@yahoo.com) and Stephanie Shively [stephanie.s.shively@gmail.com](mailto:stephanie.s.shively@gmail.com)

Financial Advisor - Mary Sherrill Ware [mary.sherrill8@gmail.com](mailto:mary.sherrill8@gmail.com)

Mary Long [mlong4@carolina.rr.com](mailto:mlong4@carolina.rr.com)

Teresa Brenner [tbrenner@carolina.rr.com](mailto:tbrenner@carolina.rr.com)

## **Women's Impact Fund Site Visit Guidelines 2013-2014**

Site visits provide an opportunity for work teams to evaluate grant applications and obtain additional information. It is important to follow the guidelines below to ensure consistency and fairness to the organizations being considered for funding.

1. Be prepared.
  - Read the grant application, budget and other materials provided by the organization before the site visit.
  - Compare these materials to the Letter of Inquiry that the organization provided. If there are substantial differences, ask about those at the site visit.
  - Google the organization to see if any publicly available information raises questions for the site visit.
2. Be punctual. Arrive at the appointed time, and limit your visit to no more than 90 to 120 minutes. The intent is to be thorough but not use too much of the organization's time.
3. For consistency, at least two of the same work team members should attend all four site visits. It is strongly recommended that the work team leader and the work team editor attend all four site visits. Let your work team leader know in advance if you will not be able to attend a site visit. We have advised the nonprofits that the Executive Director, staff member(s) directly responsible for the project or program, and a member of the nonprofit's board of directors (if possible) should attend.
4. Try to schedule the site visit during a time when you can observe the organization's activities. But remember that you also should focus on interviewing the staff and board members of the nonprofit, and be sure to leave ample time for that.
5. Assign one team member to take the lead in asking questions at the site visit.
  - If you have particular questions for the organization, get those to the work team member who will be leading the site visit in advance
  - Use prepared questions based on the information in the grant proposal and any other research your work team has done on the organization or the focus area in general.
  - This is your opportunity to gain deeper insight and answer questions not addressed in the grant application.
  - If other work team members have questions based on the discussion at the site visit, manage those accordingly.
6. Assign one team member with financial expertise to review the budgets and financial information provided by the nonprofits and to provide questions based on that review to the work team member leading the site visit. This does not mean that other work team members need not review the budgets and financial information.
7. ***Use your work team's Evaluation Liaison*** to review the grant application from an evaluation perspective and provide questions to the member leading the site visit about whether the organization can reasonably expect to achieve measurable and meaningful results consistent with the proposal.

8. Assign one work team member to take notes during the site visit.
9. If the work team has questions that would be difficult for an organization to answer on the spot, you may give them to the organization in advance. However, to avoid being burdensome, please explain that you are providing the questions in advance to give them time to prepare but that you do not want or need written answers to them.
10. In preparing for the site visit, keep in mind that your work team's editor will need to write a ballot summary for the proposal.
  - If information required in the ballot is not provided in an organization's grant application, the site visit is the best place to get it.
  - Review the ballot form before the site visit and make sure that all of the required information is covered either in the grant application or in the site visit.
11. At the site visit, notice physical surroundings.
  - Is the location accessible to the targeted population?
  - Are there adequate physical resources for the successful implementation of the proposal?
  - If the proposal requires transportation of persons to receive services, have adequate arrangements been made for transportation?
12. One thing to be assessed at the site visit is the organization's readiness to implement the proposal. If the organization is awarded a grant, how much ramp up time will it need before beginning? What does the organization need to do to increase capacity in order to begin and fulfill grant proposal?
13. Leadership and staff qualifications are best determined through direct contact rather than a written grant application.
  - Use the time to talk to staff and ask them to tell you about their work and the proposal under consideration.
  - Ask about their direct experiences in the field of work related to the proposal.
  - Try to assess the depth as well as the quality of leadership. If the organization depends largely on the leadership of one key person, what happens if that person is no longer involved?
14. Notice if the staff and leadership of the organization are energized about the proposal.
  - Are they excited when they are talking to you about it?
  - How long have key staff members been at the organization?  
What would the plan be if someone leaves during the grant period?
15. Talk about the Board of the organization.
  - Determine its strengths and weaknesses as well as the level of support for the proposal. Does the organization have a strategic plan and/or long range plan?
  - Was the Board involved in developing the strategic plan?
  - Does all of the Board contribute financially to the organization?
  - At what level of giving? What % of total individual giving comes from the board?

16. If the proposal involves collaboration with another organization, find out who the partner will be and what it will do.
- Is the collaborative arrangement currently in place? Who is the key contact with the collaboration partner? Can we have their contact information?
  - If not, what is the status and what will the arrangement be?
  - Google the collaborating organization in advance to see if any publicly available information raises questions for the site visit.

Collaboration is a goal that the WIF guidelines encourage, but the involvement of organizations that WIF has not vetted in projects that WIF funds can be a complicating factor. If the collaboration involves governmental agencies, the issues can be particularly complex.

17. If you are asked questions about the grants process, please be consistent in the information you provide. We have given the organizations a general overview of the process as well as a timeline. The following points address some of the most frequently asked questions:
- The Grants Committee will select the top ten proposals that will go on the ballot (two per focus area). All organizations will be notified of their status by the end of March.
  - If interested, we will give feedback to the organizations not selected to be on the ballot. The Grants Chair will provide this feedback, after getting input from the work teams.
  - The entire WIF membership will vote to select the top five proposals (one per focus area), and the ten finalists will be notified of the results after the May board meeting. .
  - The size of the grant pool is not yet finalized. We are confident we will have enough funds to make high impact grants in all five focus areas. However, it is not yet known if we will be able to fund all five grants at the levels requested.
  - Grant awards will be given at our Annual Meeting.
  - The organizations should call Susan Ehrman if they have any questions about the process after the site visit. Susan's contact information has been provided to them.
18. Be mindful of the impression you make. Your questions during the site visit should be probing but respectful. *Don't engender false hope* on the part of the nonprofit with overly encouraging statements. Remember that your work team's discussions are confidential, so refrain from discussions at the location of the site visit and with friends or acquaintances who may be involved in the organization. In order to avoid any impression of favoritism, do not accept gifts from the organization if they are offered.

Once the site visit is over, **please do not have further contact with the organization.** If you need some clarification or additional information after the site visit, please contact the Grants Chair first, and we will decide how to best obtain the information. Notes:

## **Grant Evaluation Guidelines**

### **How to Read a Grant Proposal and Prepare for a Site Visit**

1. Is the grant proposal well prepared, organized, clear and concise?
2. Is this a compelling proposal based on the overall funding priorities of WIF? Specifically, does the proposal:
  - Provide a creative, substantive approach to a critical need in our community and/or address an important emerging issue?
  - Involve collaborations or foster partnerships with other nonprofits and public agencies?
  - Present a solid plan to measure its results?
  - Have the clear potential to be sustained beyond the grant period?
3. Does the organization have the core know-how to implement the proposal?
4. What is the target population for the proposal?
  - Is the target population clearly identified?
  - How well does the organization know the targeted population?
  - How will the population be selected?
  - Is the targeted population included in the development and operation of the project or program?
5. Is the timeline realistic for accomplishing the proposal's goal? Does the timeline have specific dates? Keep in mind when the grant funding will be awarded (typically in May).
6. What is the organization's viability and effectiveness? In other words:
  - Does the organization have adequate staff and resources to implement the proposal?
  - Is the staffing plan realistic?
  - Who will be the point person for the project? Would this project be viable without this point person?
  - Are the staff members who are working on the project or program qualified?
  - Is the organization's Executive Director an effective leader?
  - Is the Board of Directors strong and involved?
  - Does the organization have a good track record?
  - Is the organization respected in the community?
  - Explore the agency's fundraising history and future plans. Do they have a strategic plan? How does the proposal fit into that plan?
7. Collaboration:
  - Are there other organizations involved in the proposal that are key to implementation? If so, what is their level of commitment? Involvement?
  - Are there other funding sources involved? Is the proposal contingent on getting funding from any of these other sources?



8. Is the proposal duplicative of the work of any other organizations? If so, how are the existing programs insufficient?
9. Funding needs/budget analysis:
  - Is the budget realistic?
  - Is it clear what each line item consists of?
  - Is the grant request a significant portion of the organization's overall annual budget?
  - Is it clear how WIF funds will be used?
  - Are the estimated costs reasonable given the benefits derived?
  - Is the requested funding level necessary for the proposal to go forward? Is there a demonstrated need for this funding?
10. Is the organization itself financially sound? Which staff member manages their finances? Are checks and balances in place?
11. Sustainability:
  - Does the organization have sufficient resources to continue the project or program beyond the grant period?
  - Do solid plans exist for long-term funding? (Ask very specific questions about future support. Also, ask how the organization is cultivating individual donors and planned giving).
12. Measuring success:
  - Is there a realistic plan for measuring the progress of the project or program and evaluating its success?
  - Are the success measures listed in the grant application clear? Do they actually measure whether the organization achieves the goals of the proposal?
  - Does the agency have the staff / resources to monitor its progress and report measurable results?
  - Can you determine from the RFP what WIF is "buying" for its investment?
13. Has the organization implemented a pilot program for this project or program? If so, what were the results? Has a similar project or program been successful in another city or state?
14. Does the project or program have the potential to be high-impact and create important and lasting benefits in the community?
15. Is funding this grant proposal the best use of WIF funds? Is it something that WIF members would be proud to sponsor?

Notes:

## **What Would Barbara Ask: Looking at Grant Proposals from the Evaluator's Perspective**

### **What should you consider when reviewing results projections?**

Results can fall into three areas:

1. **Who** will be served with WIF money?
  - " This could include children, families, volunteers, students
2. **What** services will be provided with WIF dollars?
  - " This could include classes, home visits, training sessions
  - " Again, be very careful about counting services for 12 months
  - " Be sure to Differentiate between WIF-funded and other services
  - " It is a good idea to understand the full scope of their program so you can determine what % of their work is WIF-funded
3. **What** changes do they anticipate from July . June in terms of change in knowledge, attitude, behavior or state of being?
4. What is the impact and what are the expected outcomes. **Results** should be measurable, meaningful and achievable during the grant period.
  - Are they using a recognized survey for measures such as increased self-esteem of are they creating their own?
  - Have they ever tried to measure these items before?
  - If they plan to survey families, for example, ask them how they plan to get the surveys back
  - Are their projections for the entire 12 month grant period? For example, did the agency allow for recruitment time, start-up time if hiring staff, or is the program based on CMS's academic calendar?
  - Be careful about multi-year grants, will they follow the same group over a period of years?
  - Often agencies report their numbers for the whole program rather than focusing on WIF funded components

*By the end of your LOI review and Site Visit you should be able to answer Who, What and So what. Who is being served, What are the services being provided and So What is the impact and what are the expected outcomes?*

#### **Important Questions to Ask**

1. What are we buying for our money?
2. Is funding this grant proposal the best use of WIF funds?
3. Is it something that WIF members would be proud to sponsor?
4. Do they have the staff and software to track their results? (Can they track them the way they say they can?) Can they separate results achieved during the grant year from long-term outcomes?

**Remember:** Evaluation helps programs see what is working and where they can do better. It is part of a learning process that all programs go through as they work to help their clients in an effective, cost efficient manner. *Numbers alone cannot capture the true picture of a program's successes. It is very important for us to also capture the stories behind*

# WIF Grants Committee 2013-2014

## Financial Statement Reporting and Disclosure Discussion

### Approaching a Financial Review

- *Financial documents are more than just numbers – they tell a story*
- Review financial statements prior to your site visit for a good source of discussion topics
- If you don't understand something or it doesn't make sense – ask questions
- How does the program budget relate to the financials?
- Beyond the numbers - ask about finance process, governance and sustainability.

### Audit vs. Review vs. Compilation

- **Audit:** Provides the highest level of assurance that an organization's financial statements are free of material misstatement and are fairly presented based upon the application of generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). An audit includes confirmation with outside parties, testing selecting transactions by examining supporting documents, completing physical inspections and observations and evaluating the internal control systems of the organization.
- **Review:** Provides limited assurance on an organization's financial statements. During a review, inquiries and analytical procedures present a reasonable basis for expressing limited assurance that no material modifications to the financial statements are necessary, and that they are in conformity with GAAP. A review is a "does it make sense" analysis.
- **Compilation:** A compilation provides no assurance on an organization's financial statements. The CPA takes financial data provided by the nonprofit and puts it in a financial statement format that complies with GAAP, with no testing or analytical procedures performed.
- **Management Compilation:** No auditor is used and financial statements are put together by management and reviewed by the board. It is important with a compilation that you discuss with management and board representatives their processes for booking, verifying and overseeing financial results.

### Interpreting an Audit

- Auditor's Letter
  - Unqualified Opinion: "In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly ... in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles."
  - Qualified Opinion: "...in our opinion, except for the omission of...the accompanying financial statements present fairly...."
- Management Letter: Cites areas in the organization's internal control system that are evaluated to be weak and suggest how these areas can be improved

## **Financial Statements**

- Notes to the Financial Statements – it often helps to read these first
- Accounting Basis: Accrual (GAAP), Cash Basis and Modified Cash Basis
- Balance Sheet – Point in Time
  - Look for: Restricted and unrestricted net asset, liabilities (debt and other obligations)
- Income Statement – Period of Time
  - Unrestricted and Temporarily Restricted revenue
  - Program Revenue (helps with sustainability)
  - % Allocation on Statement of Functional Expenses (Program, Management, Fundraising)
- Statement of Cash Flows – summarizes major changes in net assets
- Notes to the Financial Statements
  - Information about accounting basis, contributions (restricted and unrestricted), assets, functional expenses, loan, debt and other commitments, any significant business risks or concentrations/dependencies, etc.

## **Form 990 (990-N and 990-EZ)**

- *Form is really long.....so be careful before you print!*
- Required tax and information filing for non-profits
- Should be closely reviewed in lieu of an audit
- Pertinent information from the Form 990
  - Mission and Activities – description of principal programs
  - Employees and key employee compensation
  - Board of Directors
  - Significant Grants
  - Policies and Governance
  - Other affiliate or key business relationships
- The Form 990 does not include most in-kind donations in revenue and expense

## **Examples**

- WIF 2012 Financial Statement

## **A few final considerations:**

- There are no stupid questions – we are looking at providing a very large grant to these organizations! If something does not make sense to you – it probably doesn't make sense!
- Reserve the right to call the auditor if something is confusing or bothering you

Some of the organizations may be local branches of a national organization (e.g. Teach for America) – in that case, see if you can also get local or program financial statements

## **WIF Grants Committee 2013-2014**

### **Financial Statement Reporting and Disclosure**

- 1. Financial Audits**
  - a. Does the Organization have a financial Audit? Is it unqualified?
  - b. Is the organization a subsidiary of a larger organization with a financial audit? If so, do you have separate financials for the local organization?
  - c. If there is no financial audit available – I would recommend that you have a responsible party from the organization and/or board speak to the preparation of and governance over the financials. Does the organization plan to do a financial audit? If not – why not? (typically the reason is cost)
- 2. Financial Budget**
  - a. Do we have a financial budget for the organization requesting funding?
  - b. If the funding is for a large program within the organization, do you have a financial budget for the program?
  - c. Do we have actual comparative data for the financial budget?
  - d. Are the numbers in the budget consistent with the request we have received?
- 3. Income Statement:**
  - a. What are sources of revenue? Are they sustainable?
    - i. Program service revenue: Fee for service – can include government contracts
    - ii. Donated revenue: Public grants, private grants, foundations, corporations, individuals, etc.
    - iii. Does the agency have an endowment which contributes revenue annually?
    - iv. Do we understand how temporarily and permanently restricted net assets (if any) impact their ability to meet expenses?
  - b. What is the breakdown of expenses? Have there been any recent changes?
    - i. Program (expenses associated with fulfilling the organization's mission)
    - ii. Administrative (operating overhead – a portion of which may be allocated to program expenses)
    - iii. Fundraising (expenses associated with raising and maintaining donor revenue)
  - c. Does revenue consistently cover expenses?
- 4. Balance Sheet**
  - a. Does the agency have debt? Do you understand the terms of the debt (interest and principal payments) and the ability of the agency to meet these terms?
  - b. Does the agency have a positive net asset balance?
- 5. Notes to the financial statements – look for:**
  - a. Mission description
  - b. Understanding of investments and/or debt
  - c. Property/facilities – owned and/or leased? Are terms sustainable?
  - d. Other risks identified